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Fil-Am in 'AI' all-girl fight

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Ecozone investments up 249% to P22.4B

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Pacquiao protest set as judge admits error

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Sa mata ng dayuhan, maayos ba ang halalan?
PISTA O PULTIKA? MAMAYA SA ABC 5

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Tuesday, May 11, 2004 ★★★ 46 pages / 4 sections / vol. 19 / no. 153 P18
website www.inq7.net

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Voter No. 84 came by chopper

VOTER No. 84 arrived from Malacañang by presidential chopper at the Lubao Central Elementary School in Barangay San Nicolas 1, Lubao, Pampanga, and took only five minutes to complete her ballot yesterday.

President Macapagal-Arroyo was scheduled to vote at the opening hour in her father's

VOTER A18

One voted in a toilet; one voted in air-con comfort

By Volt Contreras and Blanche S. Rivera

ONE walked, the other alighted from a luxury car.

One wore rubber slippers, the other, riding boots.

One voted in a dark toilet, the other, in an air-conditioned hall illuminated by chande-

ONE VOTED A17

PANFILO LACSON, 8:05 a.m.
Bayang Luma Elementary School
Imus, Cavite.

FERNANDO POE JR., 7:20 a.m.
Xavier School
San Juan, Metro Manila

SN. NICOLAS 1ST

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, 9:45 a.m.
Lubao Central Elementary School
Lubao, Pampanga

RAUL ROCO, 9:30 a.m.
Sta. Cruz Elementary School
Naga City

EDDIE VILLANUEVA, 8:45 a.m.
Bunlo Elementary School
Bocaue, Bulacan

GMA, FPJ in tight race

Surprise: Loren widens lead over Noli in early quick count

By Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and actor Fernando Poe Jr. were neck and neck in the presidential race as of last night, according to partial and unofficial results of a quick count being conducted by a private computer school.

As of 10:35 p.m. Ms Macapagal had 215,671 votes, while Poe had 213,564 votes.

In the vice presidential race, Loren Legarda was ahead of Noli de Castro. Legarda had 299,357 votes and De Castro, 264,040. Hermie Aquino had 41,073.

It was a see-saw battle with the lead changing almost by the hour. Ms Macapagal was ahead at 7:56 p.m. by 822 votes, but Poe overtook her at 10 p.m. by 2,547 votes.

The quick count by AMA Education System showed Panfilo Lacson in third place, followed by Raul Roco and Eddie Villanueva. Lacson had 103,197 votes, Roco, 55,122 and, Villanueva, 53,511.

The votes came from 10,759 precincts, representing 3.6 percent of the total of 295,459 precincts nationwide.

Karim Bangcola, AMA executive president, said the 10,759 precincts were located in 62 towns and cities in Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao.

AMA is conducting the quick count for "Eleksyon 2004," the coverage of the local and national elections by GMA 7, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inq7.net, PLDT, Smart, Catholic Media Network, the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, dzBB and New Media Inc.

AMA is owned by Amable Aguiluz V, presidential consultant on computer education during the Estrada administration. But Aguiluz is widely believed to be supporting Ms Macapagal.

The partial results came from Butuan, Legazpi, Balanga, Batangas City, Lipa, Nasugbu, Batangas, Baguio, Tagbilaran, City of Valencia, Malolos, Meycauayan in Bulacan,Tuguegarao, Iriga, Naga City, Roxas City, Bacoor in Cavite, Dasmariñas in Cavite, Cebu City, Lapu-lapu and Mandaue.

Cotabato City, Davao City, Laoag, Iloilo City, City of Santiago, City of San Fernando, Biñan in Laguna, Calamba, San Pablo City, San Pedro in Laguna, Santa Cruz in Laguna, Tacloban, Cagayan de Oro, Manila, Caloocan, Las Piñas, Makati, Mandaluyong, Muntinlupa, Parañaque, Pasig, Quezon City, San Juan in Metro Manila, Valenzuela City, Bacolod and Dumaguete.

Cabanatuan, Gapan, Puerto Princesa, Angeles, San Fernando City in Pampanga, City of Alaminos, Urdaneta, Dagupan, Lucena, Antipolo, Cainta in Rizal, City of Sorsogon, General Santos, City of Tarlac, Olongapo and Zamboanga City.

Bangcola said AMA's quick count would only last for 48 hours in line with the agreement it entered into with its partners in "Eleksyon 2004."

The election results were collected from the precincts by 15,000 AMA-trained volunteer students from 200 campuses of AMA and its sister schools.

Roving volunteer students progressively retrieved early tally results as they

GMA A8

ELEKSYON 2004

As of 10 35 p m
May 10 2004

		AMA 10,759 out of 295 459 precincts
	PRESIDENT	
1	Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria M.	215,671
2	Poe, Fernando Jr. K	213,564
3	Lacson, Panfilo M.	103,197
4	Roco, Raul S.	55,122
5	Villanueva Eduardo	53,511
	VICE PRESIDENT	
1	Legarda, Loren B.	299,357
2	De Castro, Noli L.	264,040
3	Aquino, Herminio S.	41,073
4	Pajo Rodolfo T	3,102
	SENATORS	
1	Roxas, Mar Manuel II A.	391,828
2	Pimentel, Aquilino, Jr. Q.	304,390
3	Lim, Alfredo S.	302,232
4	Gordon, Richard J	301,923
5	Madrigal, Jamby A.S.	285,000
6	Revilla, Bong Ramon Jr. B.	276,573
	Santiago, Miriam D.	266,898
8	Cayetano, Pia Juliana S.	264,026
9	Enrile, Juan P.	260,076
10	Biazon, Rodolfo G.	250,741
11	Estrada, Jinggoy E.	231,602
12	Barbers, Robert Z.	222,880
13	Maceda, Ernesto M	220,120
14	Lapid, Manuel M	200,677
15	Mercado, Orlando S.	179,525
16	Osmeña, John Henry R.	177,484
17	Anson-Roa, Ma Elisa Bools C.	169,917
18	Tatad, Francisco S.	141,572
19	Chavez, Frank I.	141 568
20	Jaworski, Robert S	136,715

Complaints from voters, teachers swamp Comelec

By Martin P. Marfil

THE COMMISSION on Elections was tested yesterday, and was found sorely wanting.

Whether in slum area or exclusive village, urban area or countryside, complaints of missing voters' names, ballots missing or sent to the wrong places, ballot switching and snatching, the presence of armed goons, problems with indelible ink, lack of poll precincts, and the omission of certain candidates' names flew thick and fast.

The Comelec's dismal preparations for the polls also took up much of the complaints relayed to the Department of Education by teachers serving as election inspectors.

Aivan Amit, officer in charge of the DepEd's first-ever election task force, said 70 percent of the calls it received from teachers involved complaints against the Comelec.

Most had to do with the lack or shortage of election paraphernalia, defective stamp pads, missing pages in the election return forms, shortage of ballots and—the most common complaint—missing names in the book of voters or the computerized voters' list, Amit said. *(See related stories in Across the Nation, Page A15)*

He said the rest of the calls were about problems that the teachers had encountered or observed, such as alleged buying.

But when asked to assess the day around noon yesterday, Comelec Cha.. Benjamin Abalos said: "So far, so good."

But he admitted that there was the usual problem of voters unable to fi their polling precincts. Abalos also read a prepared statement in which he said the significance of the elections should n be downplayed by the "weaknesses humans."

"I think there has been a little more confusion than usual owing to the problems with the voters' lists," said Bill Luz secretary general of the National Movement for Free Elections.

Luz blamed former Comelec Comsioner Luzviminda Tancangco for confusion. He said the Comelec spent " billion pesos" for its registration projec but this only resulted in " headaches."

Namfrel head Jose Concepcion said had reported to Comelec officials the inability of many voters nationwide to fin their names on lists posted outside th precincts where they had voted in th past.

"I went to my district of Forbes Par and saw there were so many proble and these problems, I believe, cover entire nation." Agence Franc Pr quoted Concepcion as saying

COMPLAINT

15 more killed in poll-related incidents

Election less violent but more deadly, says AFP

By Christian V. Esguerra, Alcuin Papa, Nelson Forte Flores and PDI Bureaus

THE GIRL screamed, "*Tatay, tatay ko* (Daddy, my daddy)," as she struggled to get into the emergency room of a Cavite hospital, where her father lay dying after an assassin had shot him in the head.

In Caloocan City, two men on a motorcycle lobbed a grenade at the headquarters of a mayoral candidate, blasting to death two women campaign workers.

In the far south of the country, another mayoral candidate was traveling in a convoy when dozens of gunmen raked the vehicles with rifle fire, killing three of his supporters.

Millions of Filipinos voted yesterday in what police and election officials described as "generally peaceful" elections, but tell that to 11-year-old Michelle Pacris of Silang, Cavite.

Her father Mike, a former member of the New People's Army (NPA), was among at least 15 people killed in the hours preceding and during the voting.

The fatalities raised to about 100 the death toll in political violence connected with the elections since campaigning began in mid-December. Among the dead were 29 local politicians.

Agence France-Presse listed an overall total of 109 deaths.

This year's elections were clearly more violent than the polls in 1998, when 50 people were killed and 144 were wounded. Among the fatalities that year were 14 politicians.

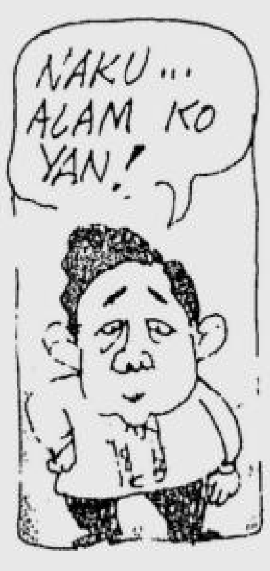
The elder Pacris, a top aide of Cavite Gov. Ireneo "Ayong" Maliksi, was riding away in a Toyota SUV after casting his ballot in Barangay Biga in Silang, Cavite, at around 2:20 p.m. yesterday when two men opened fire. His driver was unhurt. Although the police are looking into the possibility that the NPA had a hand in the killing, Senior Supt. Roberto Rosales, Cavite police chief, said some of Pacris's supposed enemies could have masterminded the killing.

Rosales said the victim had been a target of several death threats since he joined Maliksi's camp.

Pacris, also a former labor leader, had allegedly caught the ire of progressive groups after he was suspected of being the brains behind a reported crackdown by Maliksi on the labor sector inside the special economic zones in Cavite.

15 MORE KILLED A8

Losers' agony could last 6 months, says De Venecia



NAKU... ALAM KO YAN!

By Philip C. Tubeza

TAKE IT from a warrior who has tasted defeat like blood in the mouth.

"My house was one big funeral parlor," Speaker Jose de Venecia told the INQUIRER last week, recalling the 1998 national elections where he ran for president and lost.

It took him six months to he said.

The mere act of remembering made De Venecia speak in the fi second and third persons in the same breath. "*Kawawa ang matatal* (Pity the losers). I experienced that. You feel terrible."

And, not to t "You ppe

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread over Bicol Region and Eastern Visayas.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY RAY LEYESA PDI RESEARCH/05/11/04

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FrontPage

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

CHAIRMAN IN CHARGE
Commission on Election Chair Benjamin Abalos walks to a press conference in his office at the Palacio del Gobernador in Intramuros only two days after he collapsed and was taken to a hospital. Against doctors' orders, Abalos left the hospital to preside over yesterday's elections. ERIK ARAZAS

4 exit polls have 3 different winners

FOUR different exit polls following yesterday's voting produced contradictory results in the hotly contested race for president.

After polls closed at 3 p.m., voter interviews by the privately owned dzRH radio network showed President Macapagal-Arroyo likely to defeat movie star Fernando Poe Jr., the strongest of her four rivals.

The dzRH interviews showed Ms Macapagal leading Poe by 6 to 8 percentage points—roughly in line with surveys just before the elections.

But the camps of Poe and another presidential candidate, Sen. Panfilo Lacson, claimed victory for their candidates based on their own nationwide exit polls.

Partial results of a fourth exit poll conducted by the Proberz research and consultancy firm showed Poe leading the President.

Proberz

In a press conference, Proberz executive director Alfredo Sureta said Poe was voted by 39 percent of 1,774 respondents while Ms Macapagal followed with 35 percent.

She was followed by Lacson, who obtained 13 percent, Eddie Villanueva, 7 percent, and Raul Roco, 5 percent.

In the vice presidential race, Sen. Loren Legarda led with 51 percent, followed by Sen. Noli de Castro, 44 percent; Herminio Aquino, 4 percent and Romeo Pajo, 1 percent.

The Proberz exit poll was commissioned by the Christian Nationalist Union, a Catholic lay organization allied with the Coalition for Honest, Orderly and Peaceful Elections.

Sureta said the results were still tentative because Proberz was still tabulating data given by 2,236 more respondents. The firm targeted 4,010 respondents. The final results are to be released at 2 p.m. today.

The Poe camp, however, claimed to be on the way to achieving an "overwhelming victory" citing its own exit polls which supposedly showed Poe posting a 2 to 1 lead over Ms Macapagal.

Sen. Vicente Sotto, Poe's campaign manager, said at a late afternoon briefing that exit polls by the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino showed that Poe was "leading with 40 to 42 percent of the total votes cast."

Sotto said President Macapagal had "only 20 to 23 percent" going by their own exit poll.

Yet another exit poll conducted by the Informatics computer school for Lacson claimed that Lacson was leading all candidates with 42.7 percent of those surveyed going for the ex-policeman.

Out of the 1,618 respondents from all regions except the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, 692 said they voted for Lacson, according to Informatics.

Informatics said its volunteers conducted the exit poll once every 15 to 30 minutes in assigned precincts starting at 9 a.m. and ending at 3 p.m. The volunteers asked every fifth person who came out of the precincts, it said.

The official results of the elections will take a month, although a count by the independent watchdog National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) would have given a clearer picture by late last night and an accurate prediction within a week.

Wild cards

Cheating, a 12-percent bloc of undecided voters and security threats are wild cards that make the outcome far from certain.

"If the margin of victory (for Ms Macapagal) is 2 percent, then you have the chance the opposition will use that as an excuse to raise holy hell," said Scott Harrison, managing director of Manila-based risk consultancy Pacific Strategies & Assessments.

"The violence and the cheating meets my expectations because every election is plagued by that," Harrison said.

Sameer Goel, a foreign exchange strategist at the Bank of America in Singapore, said investors would be concerned about unrest and allegations of irregularities over the next few days.

"But unless there were to be a major incident, markets are unlikely to be rattled by just this," he said.

Sotto did not cite figures for the other presidential candidates in the KNP exit poll which he said was conducted as people left the voting precincts. He said the results were confirmed by Radio Mindanao Network.

Angelito Banayo, Lacson's spokesperson, said Lacson could get as many as 11 million votes, "enough to win an election."

In the Lacson poll, Poe placed second with 374 or 21.6 percent; President Macapagal third with 291 or 17.2 percent; Brother Eddie Villanueva, fourth with 141 or 7.4 percent; and Roco, fifth with 120 or 6.5 percent.

The Lacson camp said it expects his exit poll lead to taper off once Informatics shifts its operations to a quick count.

Leo Ringen, the Informatics officer in charge of the Lacson exit poll, would not comment on the statistical reliability of his group's survey, but he said the exit poll would "give us an indication of where Senator Lacson stands."

"We are not a polling firm. We are just helping the Ping Lacson for President Movement make wise decisions [through the exit polls]," he said.

Not unbeatable

Proberz's Sureta clarified that the results of its exit poll do not necessarily indicate that Poe and Legarda would definitely win the election but only to show how the people who were surveyed voted when the exit poll was conducted. He added that Poe's 39 percent "was not necessarily an unbeatable lead."

"We only want to inform the public of the present trends to avoid discrepancies and prevent cheating in the later counting," he explained.

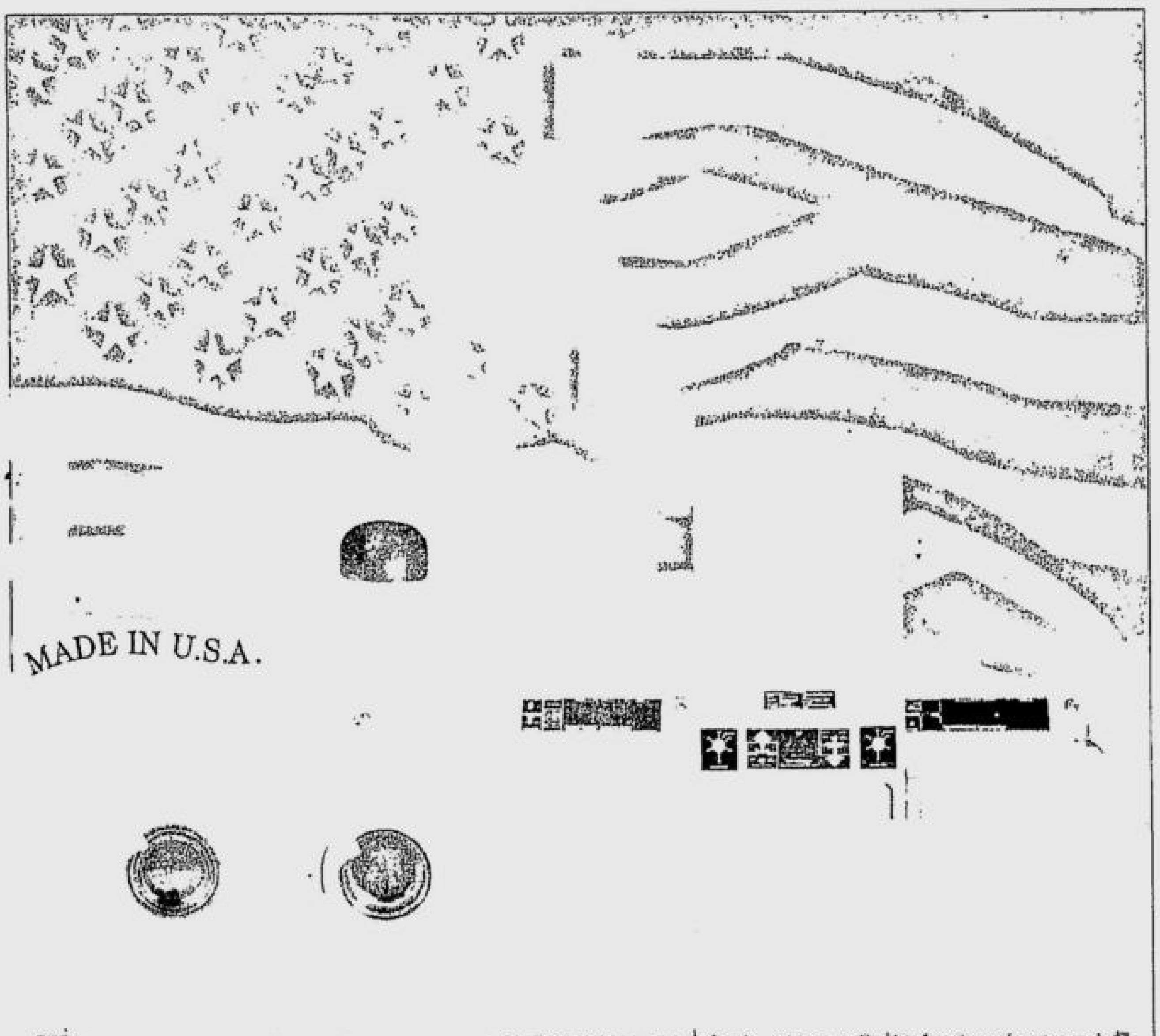
CNU media coordinator Ed Malay, who was at the Proberz press conference, said a lead as small as four percent could be easily manipulated.

Sureta said the exit poll would be more definite because, unlike during the pre-election polls, the respondents had already cast their ballots.

A discrepancy would only result in the respondents not giving the correct answer and the flaws in the selection of respondents, he said.

Proberz employed 110 interviewers nationwide. Sureta said the interviewers trooped to voting centers with the largest number of voters and interviewed people coming out of the precincts within three hours after the voting began.

The results were sent to Proberz's Quezon City main tabulating center using phone, electronic mail, fax and text messaging. *Reports from Carlito Pablo, Jerome Aning, Norman Bordadora, Christine Avendaño and Reuters*



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Absentee vote turnout is 65%, says Comelec

By Blanche S. Rivera and Jerome Aning

MORE THAN half of the eligible overseas Filipino voters cast absentee ballots for the first time for Monday's elections, the Commission on Elections said.

Among an estimated seven million overseas workers, 354,000 had registered and more than 230,000 began voting since April 11 for president, vice president and senators, Commissioner Florentino Tuason Jr. told reporters.

He said the turnout could be 65 percent, "which is very good for absentee voting."

Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Rafael Seguis, chair of the Overseas Absentee Voting Secretariat, said the elections abroad were orderly with most of the 577 overseas precincts closing at 3 p.m., Manila time, and promptly beginning the counting of votes.

It was only in Hong Kong where there was some delay in the counting because about 20 precincts still had voters inside as late as 4 p.m., Seguis said.

Hong Kong, with more than 89,000 voters, had the second largest number of overseas voters.

In Japan, Canada and the United Kingdom, where the absentee voting was done by mail, some 13,000 ballots were expected to be tallied in voting centers at the Philippine embassies there.

Expected to be the first to finish canvassing were the voting centers with less than 100 voters, namely, those in New Zealand, Pakistan, Myanmar, Iraq, Kenya, Romania, Hungary, Russia, the Czech Republic, Brazil, Cuba, Venezuela and Mexico.

Countries and territories with more than 10,000 voters were Saudi Arabia, with 96,000 voters, followed by Hong Kong, Singapore, Italy, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Taiwan.

And just like elections in the Philippines, allegations of fraud surfaced in Hong Kong and Singapore.

Bangon Pilipinas presidential candidate Bro. Eddie Villanueva said he received a video showing members of the Board of Election Inspectors in Hong Kong setting aside the ballot of one of his supporters after the inspectors allegedly glimpsed that it was a vote for him.

Villanueva said the video showed the BEI members placing the ballot under the table instead of in the ballot box.

He said that in Singapore, Filipinos were told to vote for President Macapagal-Arroyo, and when they refused the BEI did not attend to them.

"We have evidence. We have witnesses who can say that some elements in our own consulates and embassies cheated the sovereign will of the people," said Villanueva in an interview at the Bunlo Elementary School in Bocaue, Bulacan, where he cast his vote.

Villanueva, however, said his party had yet to decide if it would file a complaint with the Commission on Elections.

He had said that he would accept the outcome of the elections, even if it were not in his favor, provided the polls were clean and credible.

In Hong Kong, the turnout was "extraordinary" as more than 60,000 of the 89,000 registered overseas Filipino voters cast their ballots, said Carmela Panes, trade assistant at the Philippine consulate in the Chinese region.

"We are very glad with the turnout as it was more than we expected. It was a good opportunity to exercise their right of suffrage," said Panes. *With AP, AFP*

2 police colonels sacked

By Christian V. Esguerra

PHILIPPINE National Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. yesterday relieved two police colonels for allegedly engaging in "partisan political activities."

Ebdane, however, declined to name the colonels who were previously assigned to police offices in Luzon.

He also did not reveal how the two police officers specifically violated the PNP's code against partisan political activities.

Ebdane warned that more police officers would be dismissed for similar violations.

He said all violators would be identified and would be relieved at the end of the election period.

The relief of the two police colonels from Luzon came shortly after Ebdane warned all police units to arrest any PNP or military officer found engaging in partisan politics.

"The directive prohibiting members of the PNP from engaging in partisan political activity is very specific," Ebdane said in a statement.

3 RP fishermen rescued by Viets off disputed Paracels

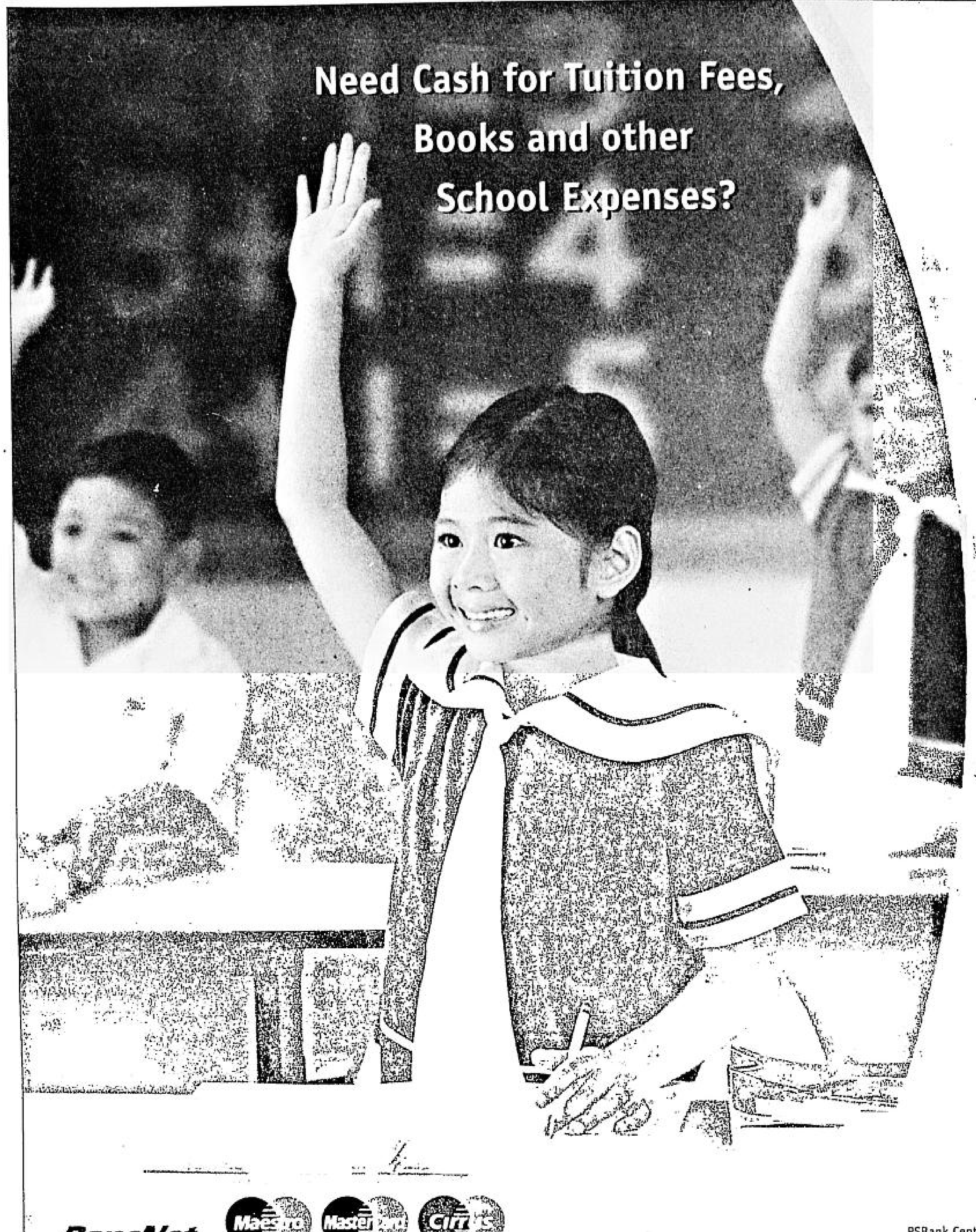
HANOI—Three Filipino fishermen were rescued by their Vietnamese counterparts after engine failure left them drifting for five days near the disputed Paracel Islands, the Philippine Embassy in Hanoi said Monday.

The fishermen were handed over to embassy officials on Friday in the central province of Binh Dinh and will be repatriated within the next few days once their exit papers are secured, spokesman Marford Angeles said.

"They left Subic on April 20 but their engine broke down and they were unable to get any help for five days until they were spotted and rescued by Vietnamese fishermen on May 1. They had to abandon their boat," he said.

The Paracel Islands are located off Vietnam's eastern coat and are claimed by both Vietnam and China. Like the Spratly Islands, which are claimed by six countries, they are a source of regional tension.

On Saturday, the Philippine Navy arrested 12 Vietnamese fishermen for poaching and illegal entry after they were caught at sea in the southern Philippines without permits. AFP



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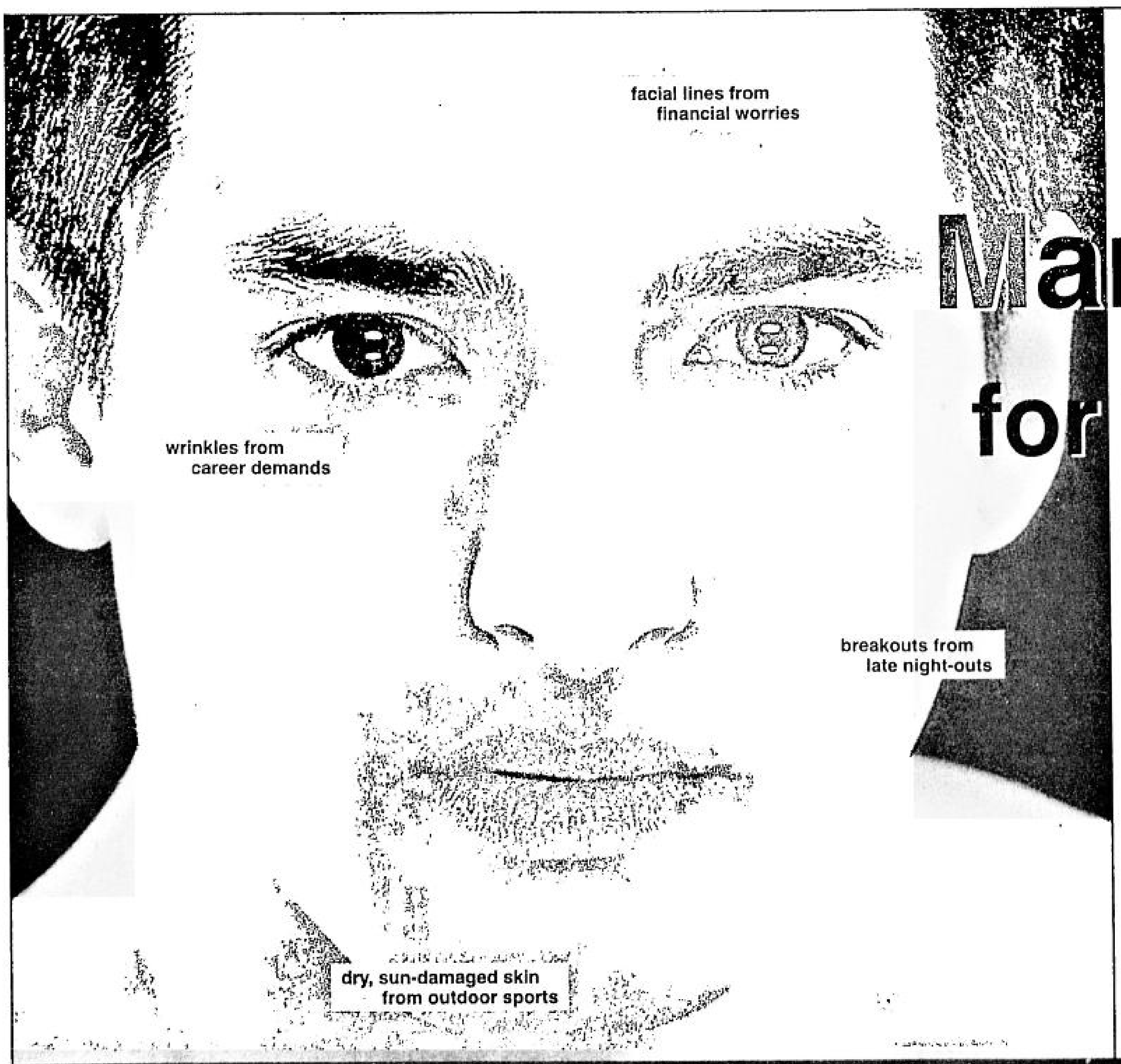
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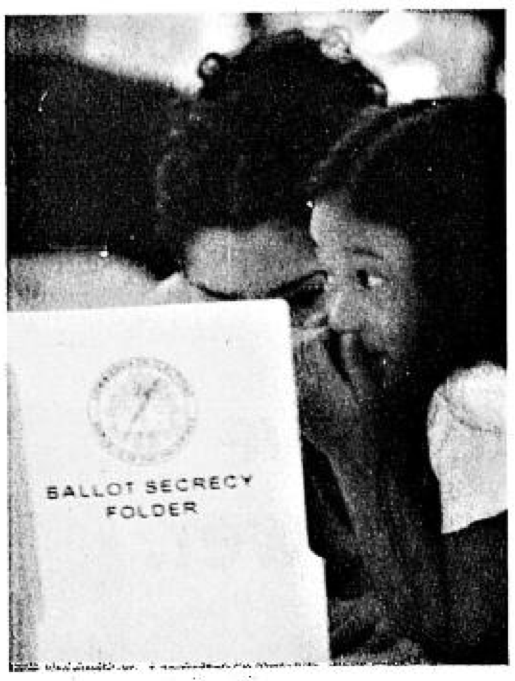
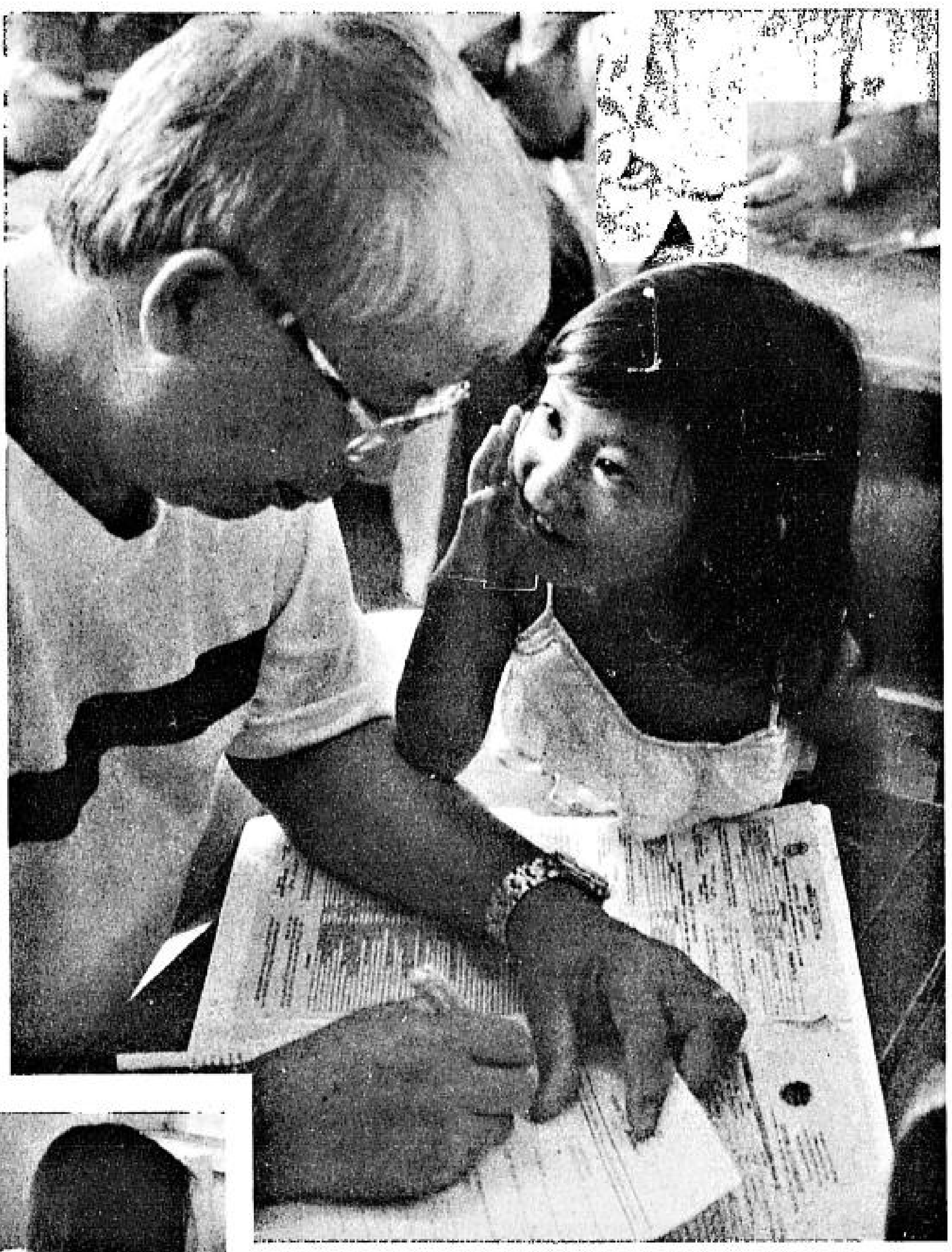
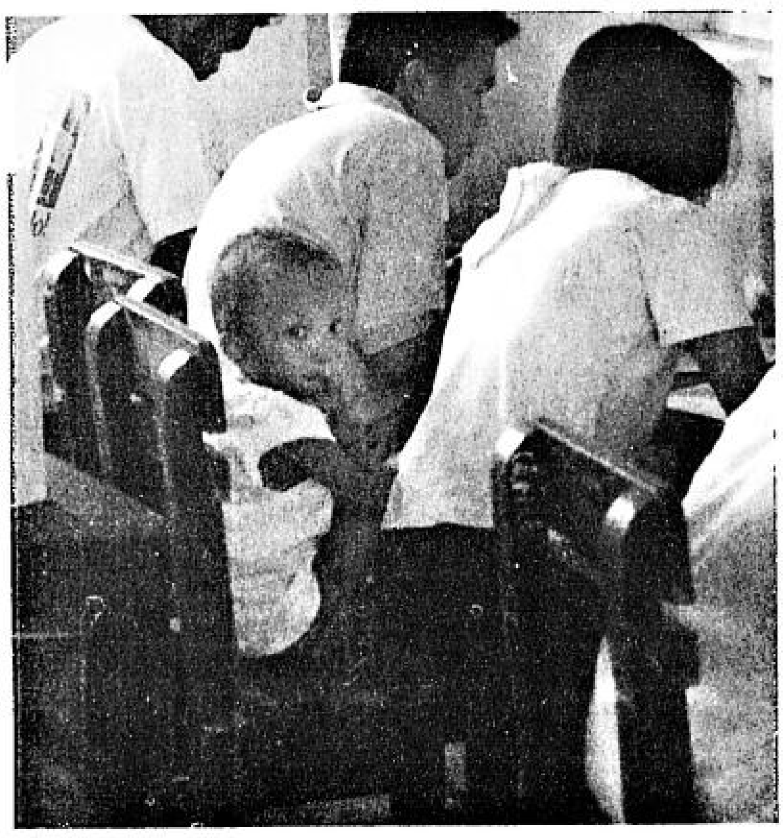




SECURITY TAPE



BALLOT SECRECY FOLDER

KIDS' DAY

It was children's day as well in the polling places all ove r the country, from Payatas to Forbes Park, as parents started 'em young by involving children in the electoral exercise. Even children of absentee voters among the overseas Filipino workers in Dubai (top right) were involved.

EDWIN BACASMAS/RYAN HERNANDEZ/ERNIE SARMIENTO

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Conspiracy talk focuses on Gringo

AS ALLEGATIONS of conspiracies swirled ahead of yesterday's elections, attention was focused on the country's most well-known coup plotter, Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan.

The former army colonel, credited with being behind seven coup attempts and the military rebellion that sparked People Power I which toppled Ferdinand Marcos in 1986, still commands respect among sections of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and some sectors of Filipino society.

The security chief of opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.'s campaign, Honasan's name was linked to allegations of plots and counter-plots that grew louder as the campaign drew to a close.

On Friday he went on national television to clear the air, saying he would not "dignify" the allegations that had been leveled at him.

"All I want is a clean, credible and honest election," he said.

"What we are looking for is long-term economic and political stability. We want to show the world we can handle clean elections. Honest elections."

Then came the punchline: "But if there is evidence of massive electoral fraud we may have to reconsider things."

He did not elaborate.

On May 3, Honasan signed a covenant with the co-chair of the administration's Lakas-CMD party, Speaker Jose de Venecia, pledging to support the programs of incumbent President Macapagal-Arroyo should she win the elections.

Honasan insisted this did not mean he had switched allegiance to Ms Macapagal. He said it only meant that he agreed with the unity call of the President.

Honasan was catapulted onto the international stage in the early 1980s when as a young colonel he led the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) that took on Marcos and his corrupt generals.

He later became a founder and leader of the Philippine Guardians Brotherhood Inc. (PGBI), a loose network of active and retired military personnel that has involved itself in events affecting the government and the military.

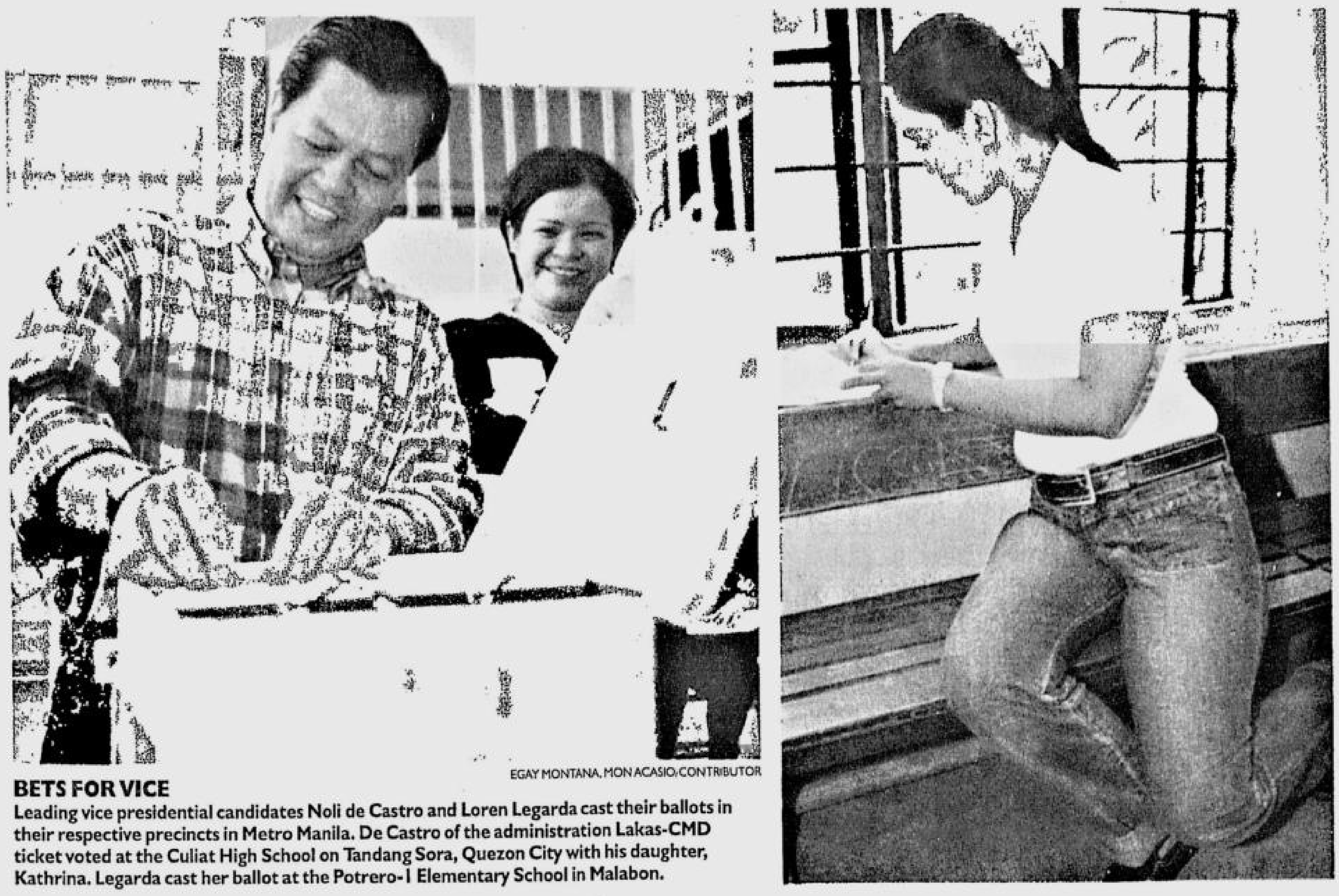
In July 2003, it came out that he was mentor to a group of junior military officers who staged a coup against the government of Ms Macapagal. The mutiny was struck down and Honasan went into hiding after the government filed rebellion charges against him.

Since then, his case has been in limbo while he surfaced and came out in support of Poe. The PGBI was granted party-list status in the meantime, and Honasan was named its nominee.

Which means that if PGBI wins, Honasan, who is on his last term as a senator, may yet return to Congress representing his military mates. *With AFP*

CORRECTION

"OUR Quick Facts" for the Eleksyon 2004 on page 1 yesterday said that four candidates were running for president and three candidates were running for vice president. It should have been five presidential candidates and four vice presidential candidates.



EGAY MONTANA, MON ACASIO/CONTRIBUTOR

BETS FOR VICE

Leading vice presidential candidates Noli de Castro and Loren Legarda cast their ballots in their respective precincts in Metro Manila. De Castro of the administration Lakas-CMD ticket voted at the Culiat High School on Tandang Sora, Quezon City with his daughter, Kathrina. Legarda cast her ballot at the Potrero-1 Elementary School in Malabon.

Let people's will prevail —Guingona

By Jerome Aning

GUINGONA

VICE President Guingona Jr. cast his ballot at exactly 7:49 a.m. at the Don Manuel Lugod Memorial Elementary School in Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental.

In a statement issued by his office in Manila, the Vice President expressed hope that "the true will of the people would be reflected in the canvassing of election returns."

Guingona reiterated his call for the people to be vigilant against possible fraud in the election. He also expressed "elation" over the early big turnout of voters in Gingoog, where his wife Ruthie de Lara-Guingona is one of the mayoralty candidates.

The Vice President quit the ruling Lakas-CMD party last March and was appointed adviser on governance and public policy of opposition candidate Fernando Poe Jr. during the election period.

Guingona, a former senator and foreign affairs secretary, is one of the few vice presidents in the history of the Philippine republic not to seek the highest post in the land.

World's pregnant males get big break

BOHOL—The future of world's most pregnant males gets a little bigger this week as new trade rules for sea horses take effect.

Countries that want to export sea horses will have to prove that local populations won't be harmed, and in many cases, this means that only sea horses at least 10 centimeters high will find their way into aquariums, curio shops and traditional medicine markets.

The minimum size limit was developed by Project Seahorse, an international marine conservation organization based in the University of British Columbia and supported by the Zoological Society of London, John G. Shedd Aquarium/University of Tasmania.

"We're trying to give sea horses a chance to reproduce before they're caught," says Dr. Amanda Vincent, chair of Project Seahorse Foundation for Marine Conservation.

Vincent explained there was a need to put in place international regulations to help contain sea horse consumption with at least 77 countries involved in trading this marine creature, many at unsustainable levels.

Part of the seahorse's predicament can be tied to its unique form of reproduction. The female supplies the eggs, but she transfers them to the male, who fertilizes and nurtures them in a brood pouch before giving birth.

Sea horses depend on their father's survival for far longer than in other fish and in a more intimate way. Most sea horse couples are also faithful to each other, making it hard for widowed sea horses to replace mates taken by fishers.

The combination of pregnant males, widespread overfishing and habitat destruction has taken its toll on sea horse population. All 33 species are now listed by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Cites).

The Cites listing, one of the first for commercially important fish, means more than 160 countries must ensure that the commercial trade of sea horses is sustainable. The regulations were approved in November 2002 but delayed for 18 months to give countries time to put in place policies to enforce them.

An estimated 24 million sea horses are taken from the wild every year, dried and sold for use in traditional medicine, while hundreds of thousands more are sold alive for the aquarium trade.

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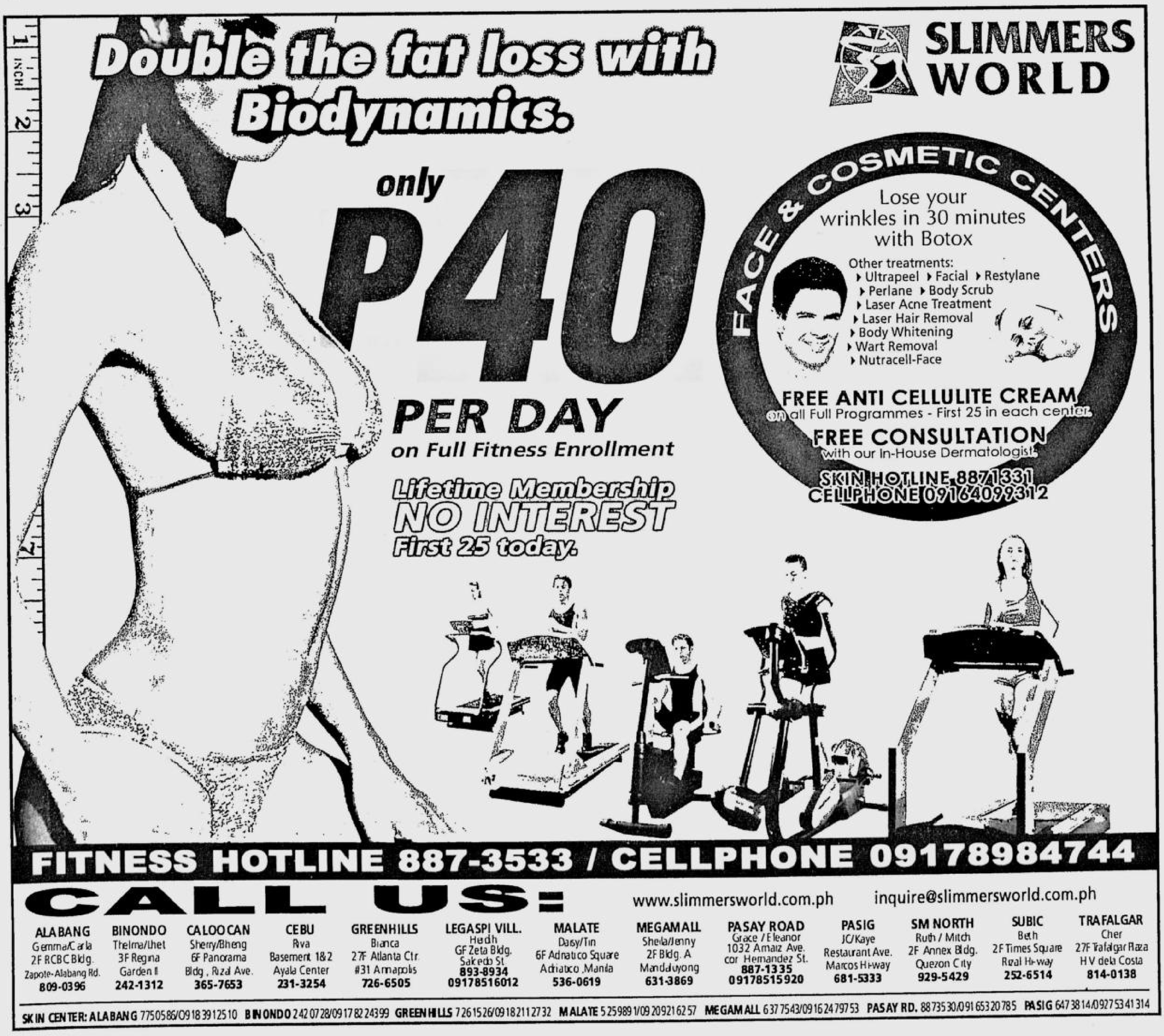

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Erap casts vote but junks 2 from KNP Senate slate

By Armand Nocum

PREFERRING to choose his own candidates rather than voting straight, deposed President Estrada, titular leader of the opposition bloc yesterday admitted he did not vote for the entire senatorial lineup of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP).

Estrada said he voted for a candidate of the administration's K-4 party, Sen. John Osmena, and another bet he refused to name "so I do not create more intrigues." He also declined to name the KNP candidates he dropped from his list, and why he did so.

Estrada voted at 8:30 a.m. yesterday inside his detention quarters in Camp Capinpin, Tanay, Rizal, where he is being held on plunder charges.

Earlier, the Commission on Elections said it would not allow the former President to vote in the military camp because it could set a precedent for the other detainees, who may make a similar request. The poll body relented later, and passed a resolution over the weekend permitting Estrada to cast his ballot at his detention quarters.

"I'm not voting straight. I will choose my candidates," he told the INQUIRER Sunday evening, although he stressed that he would vote for his buddy, actor Fernando Poe Jr. as president and Sen. Loren Legarda as his running mate.

When the INQUIRER mentioned the names of each of the KNP candidates to find out who made his list, Estrada admitted voting for son Jinggoy, who was No. 1 on his roster with former Interior Secretary Alfredo Lim in the second slot.

He said he also voted for former Senators' Juan Ponce Enrile and Francisco Tatad as well as Jamby Madrigal, but stopped short of naming the others.

After voting, Estrada said he received several guests whom he did not identify, adding that many of his allies had called him about alleged massive cheating and chaos in the elections.

He said that if the alleged election irregularities continue; people may find it hard to accept the outcome of the elections.

"I would also not believe the results if there's too much cheating going on," he said, citing warnings made earlier by Catholic bishops about possible massive fraud.

Asked what could happen to him if Poe loses, Estrada said he was ready to accept the consequences. Poe had said he would give Erap a "fair trial" if he wins the presidency.

The former president reiterated that he would not ask any favor from President Macapagal-Arroyo, a front-runner in the presidential elections.

"I had been offered to leave the country even before charges were filed against me, but I'd rather rot in jail," Estrada said.

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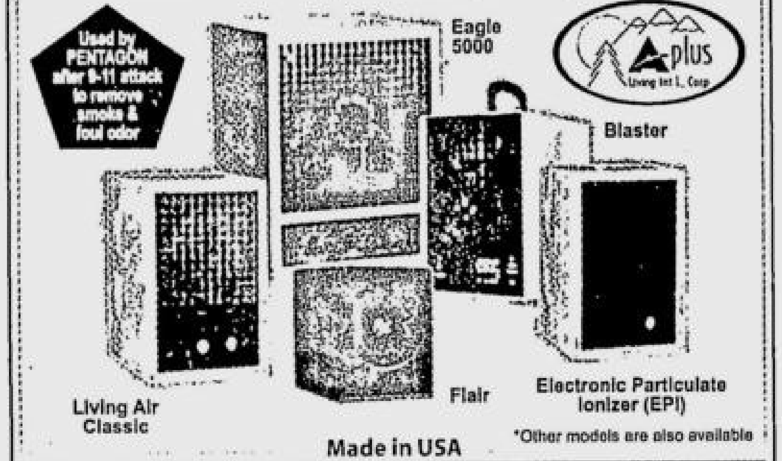

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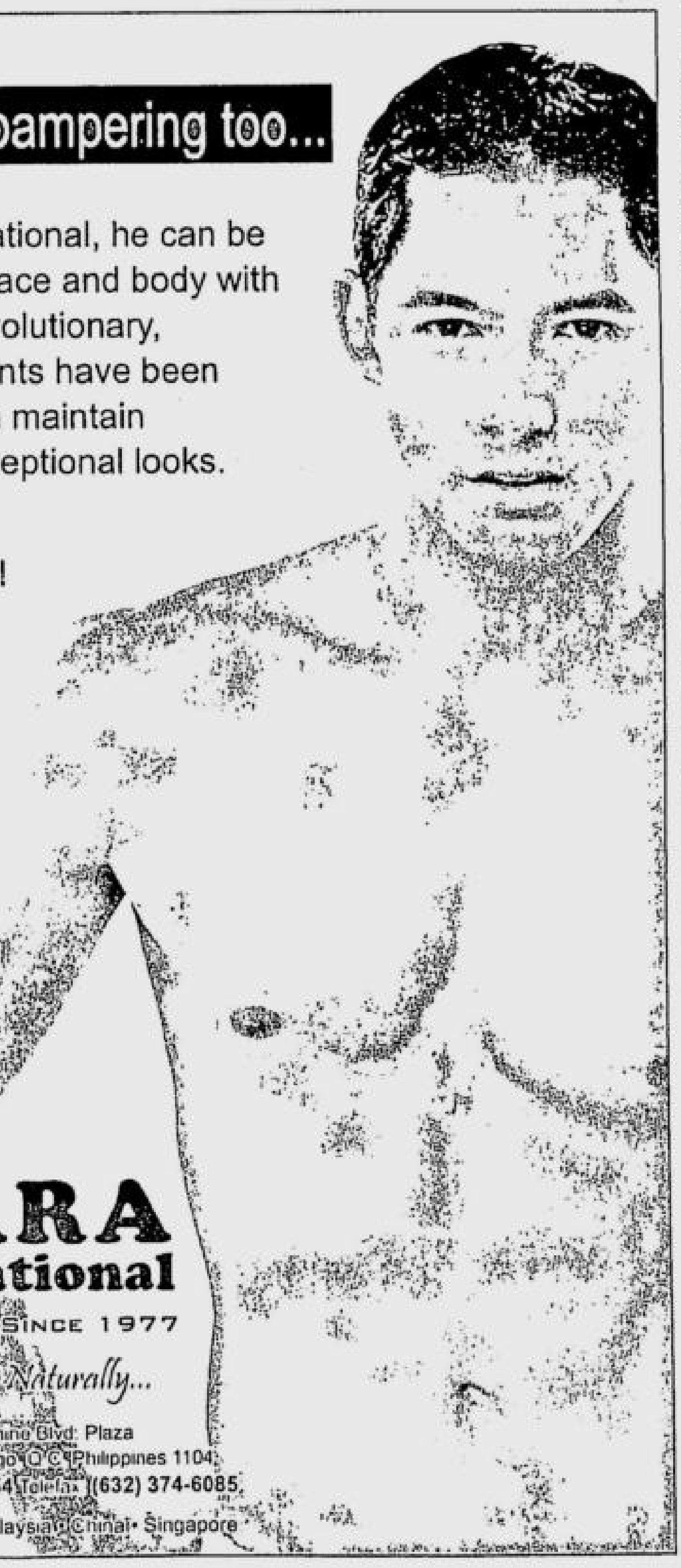

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'ELECTIONEERING'

Patriots question GMA 'ads'

By Volt Contreras

PATRIOTS, a Quezon City-based poll watchdog organized by various religious groups, yesterday questioned the airing of government-funded TV ads mentioning President Macapagal-Arroyo's name during election day.

Activist priest Joe Dizon, Patriots convenor, said the group's hotlines burned with complaints particularly over an ad by the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, which saw air play at the height of polling hours.

Dizon said he himself caught the ad on GMA-Channel 7 at around 7 a.m.

"Even if you say that it's still all about governance, it borders on electioneering and should have been pulled out of *delicadeza* and to level the playing field," the priest told the INQUIRER.

'Cool' polls

NATURE had her way of cooling down election "hot spots" yesterday.

The whole country experienced cloudy skies and scattered rain showers due to a cold front over Northern Luzon and the effects of the inter-tropical convergence zone across Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

At the height of polling hours, rains mainly drenched Batanes, the Bicol provinces, Quezon, Batangas, Palawan, Cagayan De Oro, and Surigao del Norte, according to the weather bureau.

A gray, foreboding sky covered Metro Manila when the precincts closed and quick-counts began in the early afternoon.

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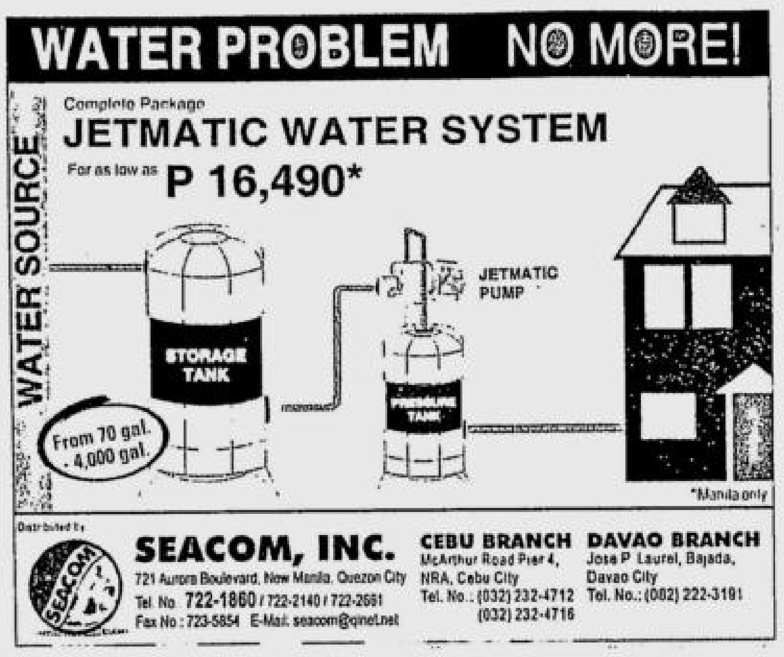
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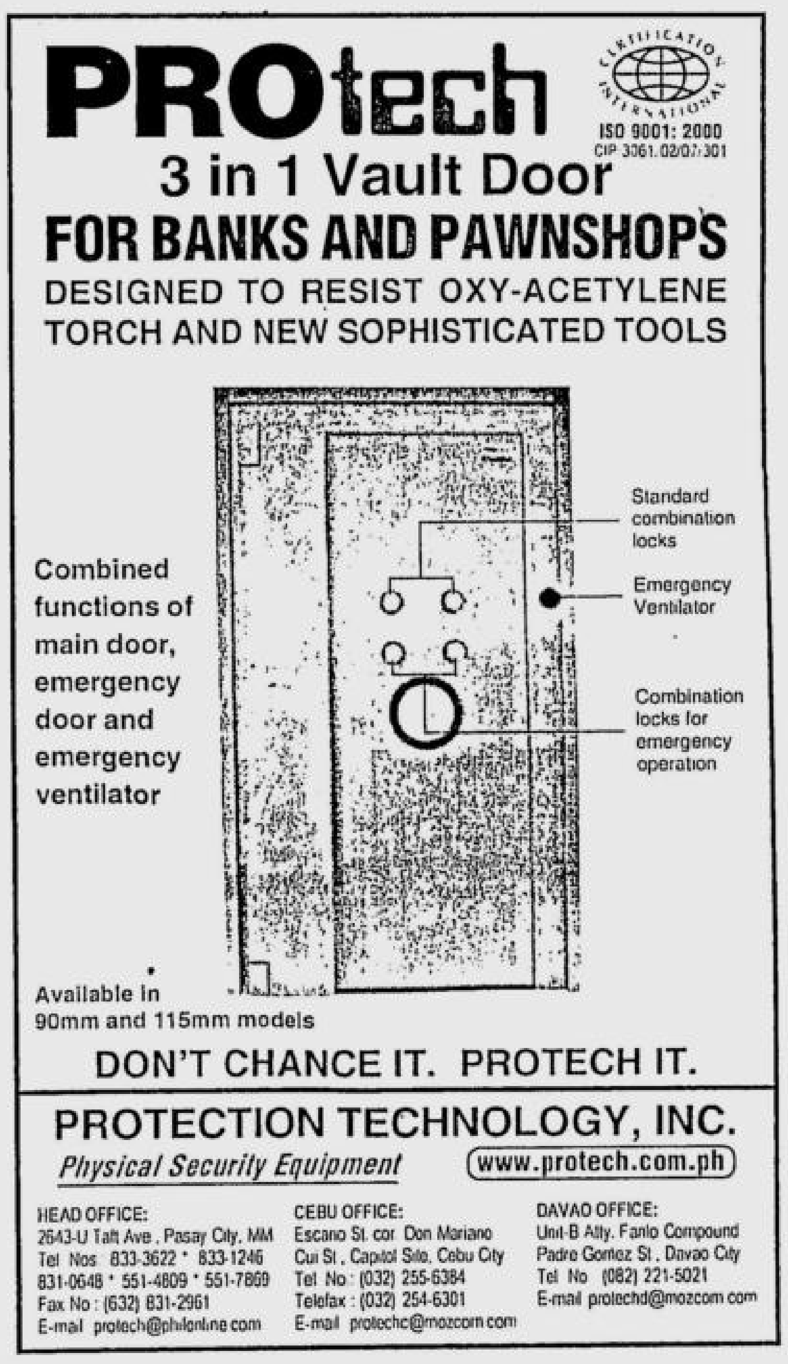
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GMA, FPJ in tight race in early quick count

From page A1

came in, beginning as soon as polling precincts started counting the votes. The roving tally retrievers then encoded and transmitted the preliminary results through a tamper-proof Internet facility to AMA processing centers in select AMA campuses.

The participating AMA schools are ABE, ACLC, AMACU, AMA Computer College, St. Augustine School of Nursing and Norwegian Maritime Academy.

To avoid duplication in the tally and to maintain the accuracy of the figures, the tally reverts to zero as soon as the previous figures are transmitted to 80 processing centers.

From the processing centers, the early tally results were transmitted through the tamper-proof Internet facility to the AMA-GMA 7 Command Center on Edsa in Quezon City. The results were also faxed to the command center to ensure their veracity.

Namfrel

The National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) is conducting its own automated quick count. It was expected to release a partial and unofficial count at 10 last night.

Guillermo Luz, Namfrel secretary general, said Namfrel personnel would be working 24 hours and were expected to complete its tabulation in one week.

But Jose Concepcion, Namfrel national president, said he would be happy if the Namfrel tabulation lasted for 10 days, considering the problems its volunteers would encounter in the field.

The tedious and chaotic process will probably take weeks to reveal who will be the next president.

Election Commissioner Resurreccion Borra said officials hoped to know the names of all nationally elected officials "probably by the end of the month—May 27 or 28, that is our target."

Exit polls and quick counts by private groups may give an early indication of who won—but the official count is not expected before late May.

In the 1992 presidential race, it took almost a month to declare the winner, while in 1998 it took 22 days.

Officials had hoped to speed up the count with vote-counting machines, but the Supreme Court threw out the plan because of bidding irregularities in a P1-billion contract to supply the computers.

More than 50,000 candidates were in the running for more than 17,000 public offices and 43 million people were eligible to cast ballots.

The process is slow from the start. The ballots are blank sheets with spaces for voters to write in the names of their candidates beside their office.

The gargantuan task of tallying votes begins at the precinct level, where public schoolteachers, acting as election inspectors, unfold the ballots and form separate piles of 100 ballots each, held together by rubber band.

The head inspector in each precinct then takes the ballots one by one to read the names of candidates and the offices they're running for, then signs and affixes his right thumbprint at the back of each ballot immediately after it is counted.

Two other workers record each vote by hand onto huge tally sheets posted on blackboards or walls, and on election return documents. Votes are valid if the voters write in either the candidate's full name, surname only or registered nickname.

After all votes are counted, the board of inspectors adds up the total for each candidate and seals the ballots in an envelope together with the tally sheet.

National canvassers

The precincts then turn everything over to a municipal board, which passes the votes along to a provincial board before they finally end up with national canvassers in the capital Manila.

The Philippines has a history of long, sometimes violent and fraud-wracked vote counting. But it is far from alone in the delays and charges of irregularities.

It took 36 days of recounting and legal wrangling for George W. Bush to be declared the winner in the 2000 US presidential race—longer than the Philippines took in its last two elections.

In Taiwan, officials have yet to settle the controversy over the March 20 election won by President Chen Shui-bian a day after he was wounded in a mysterious shooting. The losing side had challenged the outcome and court officials wearing surgical gloves began Monday to recount 13 million ballots—a process expected to last 10 days.

In its quick count, Namfrel will be using a system of alerts by text, e-mail and facsimile that will enable it to complete the tabulation in one week.

6th copy of election returns

Luz said that more than 300,000 Namfrel volunteers, composed mostly of students and representatives of civic organizations and business groups, are involved in relaying the results based from the 6th copy of the election returns to which Namfrel is entitled.

Sending by text can be done using downloadable template of 8 messages, Luz said.

With training and practice, he said, young volunteers were able to get through in less than seven minutes although there could be instances when texting could last up to 30 minutes.

"It's still a long and tedious process but it's much better now. You know, 30 minutes versus 30 days of counting is something else. That is still quick," he said.

Volunteers can text directly or use the keyword ALERT and text to 2944 for Globe mobile users or 346 for Smart. These numbers are dedicated solely to Namfrel and require a pre-registered cell phone to be able to text the report in.

"Not anyone can complain because only the Namfrel personnel can use that number to report in," Luz explained to the INQUIRER.

Unlike in the last elections when Namfrel had to use 200 computers in tabulating the returns, only 20 computers are being used at the central tabulation center in La Salle Greenhills. These are manned by a few IT personnel maintaining the software and the hardware.

Off-limits

Luz said the area where the group in charge of receiving the tally of votes from the field was off-limits to the media and visitors.

"They're not supposed to tell you what they're doing because that's my job. Their job is to call to the field, talk to all provincial and city chairmen, and our volunteers," he said.

The group also receives the reports and verifies them before these are processed for release to the media.

For the first time, there will be no encoding of votes tallied at La Salle because the returns are already tallied on the field.

Only results of the votes for president, vice president and senators will be posted on the big board.

The results of voting by overseas Filipinos, who started casting their votes as early as 30 days ago, will be included in the Namfrel tally as OV (overseas vote), which may be broken down per country from time to time.

The tabulation for party-list groups, however, will be done at the local level.

"The volunteers in the field are collating the returns. No one here. It all comes in automated via text or e-mail. There's no encoding ongoing inside La Salle," Luz said.

Luz said it takes five to six hours to complete the counting in smaller precincts nationwide, and 12 hours for precincts with as many as 200 voters. *With reports from Cynthia D. Balana and AP*

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15 more killed in poll-related incidents

From page A1

GMA 7 showed viewers gripɔing images of the young Michelle ;obbing hysterically, her arms lailing, as she and her mother unuccesfully tried to enter the hosɔital emergency room where Pacris lay mortally wounded.

"Apparently, the suspects had vaited for him. The crime was lone very clean," Chief Insp. Conrado Gongon, Silang police hief, told the INQUIRER.

"Nobody near the crime scene ould even tell how many gunhots were fired because the susects used silencers."

Gongon said the gunmen casully walked away after shooting Pacris, "as if nothing happened."

The victim was also the ounder of Barangay Alternative Community Leaders, said to have een used by Maliksi as an antift group.

Vice Gov. Johnvic Remulla deied his camp had anything to do ith the killing. He said they would never order the killing of nybody just because of politics."

The Remullas had a falling out vith Maliksi after he dropped his upport for Crispin Remulla, who running for a seat in the Lower louse.

Caloocan

In Caloocan, two men on a moorcycle threw a grenade at the ampaign headquarters of Rep. nrico Echiverri in Bagong Silang n the eve of the balloting, killing wo women.

Some volunteers inside the eadquarters managed to run but ampaign coordinator Violeta Cabigon, 38, and volunteer Joy andequille, 17, were killed.

Cabigon was sleeping while Janequilo was sitting near where the renade exploded, Northern Police istrict's Chief Supt. Marcelino ranco said. The other volunteers uffered minor wounds.

Echiverri accused the camp of Mayor Rey Malonzo of being beind the blast. But Malonzo told he INQUIRER that Echiverri's accuation was "a big lie."

Malonzo said it was possible chiverri's camp planned the exlosion to get "sympathy votes."

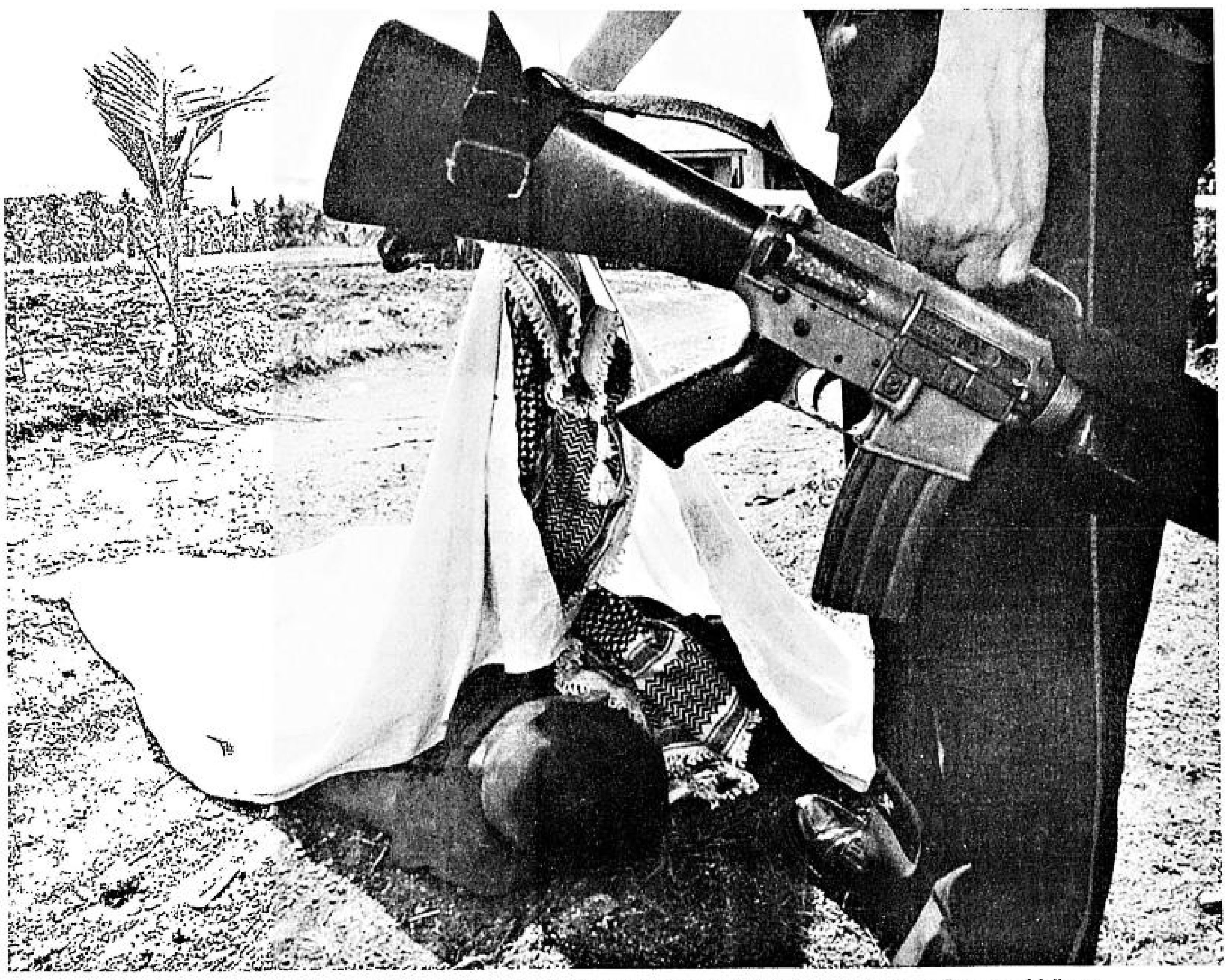
Echiverri is running for mayor gainst Malonzo's wife Gigi, forer Mayor Macario Asistio Jr. nd Rep. Edgar Erice.

Masbate

Also on the eve of elections, even suspected members of a rivate armed group were killed n a clash with police in Baleno, Masbate. No casualties were reorted on the government side.

At least 16 people died in political violence on the eve of the ote and on Election Day itself. They included three people killed when armed men ambushed the onvoy of a mayoral candidate in La Libertad town in Zamboanga del Norte on Sunday evening. Four others were wounded.

Mayoral candidate Carlos Mamac of the Lakas-CMD and 14 other people were aboard two vehicles when they were sprayed upon with bullets.



A COORDINATOR of a local candidate, Antonio Cometa, lies dead after he was shot early Monday in Sitio Byong, Barangay Malbago, Daanbantayan town, one of the hot spots in Cebu.

TONEE DESPOJO/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

The gunmen escaped.

The fatalities were aboard a dump truck that trailed the jeep of Mamac, who is contesting the seat of incumbent Mayor Noli Sulit.

Mindanao

The bloodiest single incident on Election Day occurred in Gaungon town, Zamboanga del Norte, at 1:15 a.m. when gunmen ambushed the security escorts of mayoral candidate Pedrito Darunday. Four of Darunday's men were killed.

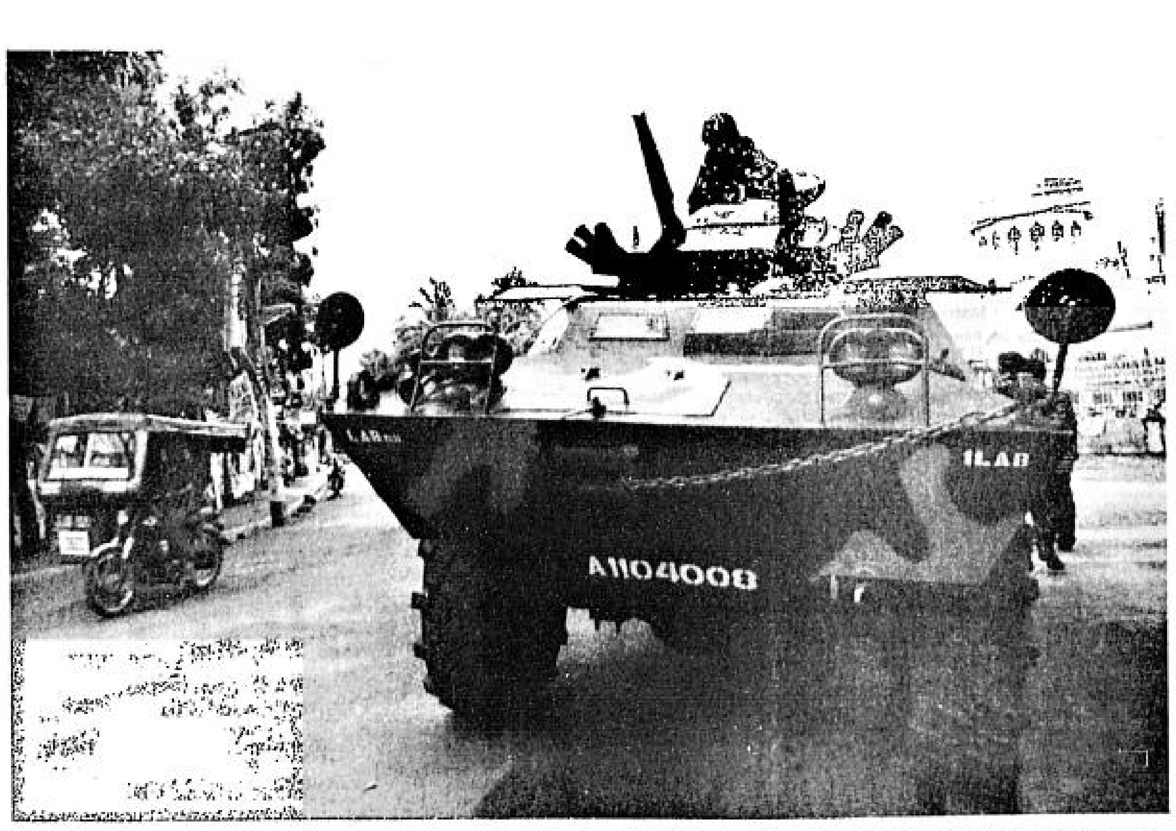
Scattered incidents of violence occurred elsewhere.

A shootout between supporters of two rival mayoral candidates injured one person in Surigao del Norte.

In Esperanza town, Sultan Kudarat, police shot and wounded a man who had snatched a ballot box.

Closer to Manila, four armed men identified with mayoral candidate Deline Rodriguez allegedly abducted six people in Barangay Manggahan in Rodriguez, Rizal.

The Rodriguez camp could not be immediately reached for comment.



ARMORED personnel carrier dominates a street in Isabela City, Basilan, to guard against the outburst of violence among squabbling political rivals.

AP

"Less violent but more deadly" was how AFP Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia summed up the elections.

Garcia noted that during the campaign period and voting day in 2001 elections, 30 candidates were either killed or wounded compared to 42 this year.

At least 12 people died in the South on the eve of the polling and during the actual balloting.

In Aurora, Zamboanga del Sur, two armed men gunned down village official Zacarias Vega outside his house.

A supporter of Pagadian City mayoral bet Samuel Co was killed when unidentified armed men attacked the victim and Co's other supporters on Sunday.

In Parang, Maguindanao, a supporter of mayoralty candidate Talib Abu was shot and killed allegedly by a supporter of reelectionist mayor Vivencio Bataga.

Election-related violence claimed the lives of two persons in Cebu and Northern Samar yesterday.

In Cebu, a political leader of independent mayoral candidate Jose de Leon was shot dead while driving a motorcycle in the northern town of Daanbatayan.

In Victoria, Northern Samar, a political supporter of a mayoral candidate Nicolas Turog (Liberal Party) was killed while his companion was wounded in an ambush by gunmen belonging to a rival camp.

"This year's elections were relatively peaceful," said Philippine National Police chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., attributing this to the security measures jointly prepared by the PNP and the Armed Forces.

The Commission on Elections placed more areas under its control, from 64 on Friday to 68, including six provinces, yesterday.

The figure was expected to mount as more reports of violence and tension trickled in.

Visayas

Shortly before 2 a.m., an attacker hurled an incendiary bomb into the treasurer's office in Taft, Eastern Samar. The explosion damaged election materials but elections proceeded in the area.

In Roxas City, Capiz, a former barangay chair was gunned down allegedly by the incumbent barangay chair assisted by three of his councilmen.

In the Visayas, Commissioner Resurreccion Borra said the Comelec was mulling over the idea of placing Santander in Cebu under Comelec control.

Despite the reports of violence, Comelec officials said the elections were generally peaceful compared to previous elections.

Prayers help

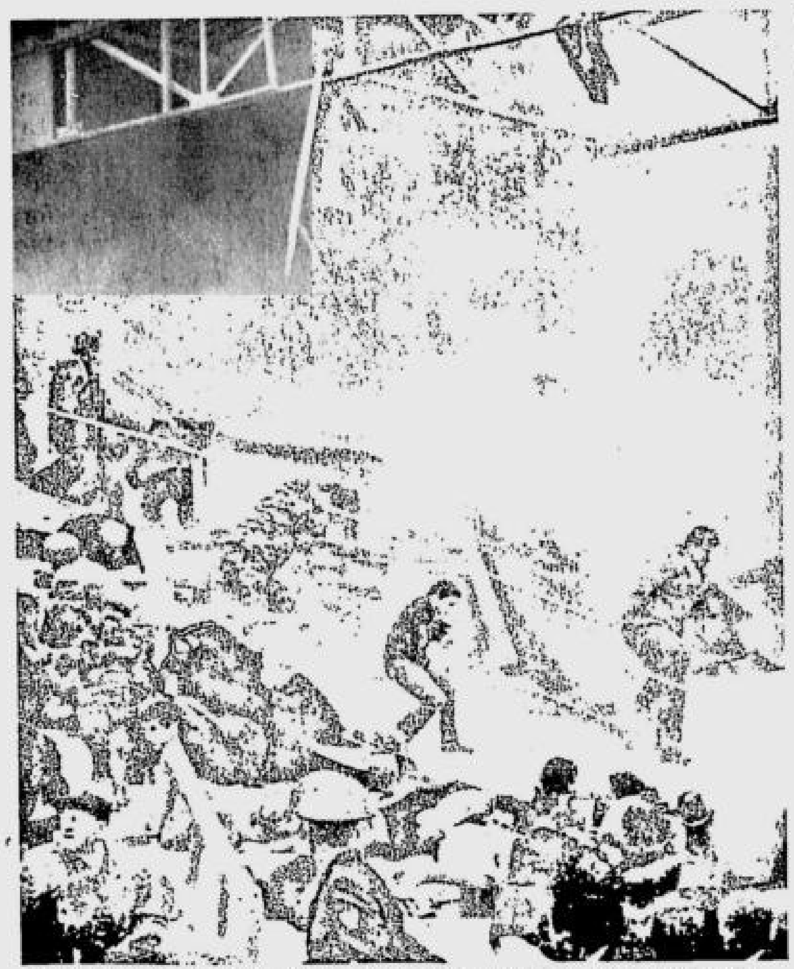
"I'm a little bit happy because of this development," Borra said.

"Probably, the prayers of the five presidentiables in San Agustin Church yesterday ... (worked). Probably, this prayer was heard in the high heavens and guided not only the entire voters but ... the entire leadership of the candidates down to the field," he added. *With reports from Martin P. Marfil in Manila; Delfin T. Mallari Jr. and Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Estanislao Caldez, Artha Kira Paredes, Donna Demetillo, Vincent Cabreza, Cristina Arzadon and Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Tonette Orejas, Anselmo Roque and Russell Arador, PDI Central Luzon Desk; Rosa-May V. de Guzman, Dennis Jay C. Santos, Ryan D. Rosauro, Jeffrey M. Tupas, Grace C. Albasin, Anthony S. Allada, Joel B. Escovilla, Bert Pacate, Julie S. Alipala, Franklin A. Caliguid, Ed General, Noralyn Mustafa, Aisha A. Echavez, Rex G. Ortega and Christine Godinez-Ortega, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Kadyrov death creates power vacuum



PEOPLE run moments after an explosion tore through a stadium in the Chechen capital where they were attending Victory Day observances, Grozny, May 9. AP

MOSCOW—Thousands of mourners headed for the funeral of Chechen President Akhmad Kadyrov, whose murder by separatists has left a power vacuum in the rebel province which is fighting Moscow's rule.

The 52-year-old former Muslim cleric, Moscow's recent hope in mostly Muslim Chechnya but a turncoat for Chechen rebels, was assassinated on Sunday when a bomb exploded at a ceremony in the capital Grozny to celebrate the 1945 victory over Nazi Germany.

Among the six others who died were a Reuters reporter, an 8-year-old girl, a close aide of Kadyrov and two bodyguards.

More than 50 people were wounded, including the commander of Russian forces in the region, Gen. Valery Baranov.

Mourners flooded heavily guarded roads to Tsentoroi, the base of Kadyrov's clan 50 km southeast of Grozny, Russian media said.

Interfax news agency said police posts were deployed every 100 meters along the 200-km long highway crossing Chechnya from east to west to provide security for arriving guests from neighboring provinces.

Funeral ceremonies are expected to last three days.

"Kadyrov's death has left a political vacuum in Chechnya," Russian parliamentary deputy Ramazan Abdulatipov, who in 1999 negotiated the defection of Kadyrov to the Kremlin camp, told Ekho Moskvy radio.

"It turns out that there is no one to pick up his banner."

In October 1999 Vladimir Putin, a prime minister soon to become Russian president, sent troops to end the effective independence won by Chechnya in a 1994-1996 war with Russia.

"There was a need for a new Chechen leader," Abdulatipov said. "It was clear the region would not accept a leader fully loyal to Moscow from the start and Kadyrov was the ideal choice."

During the first Chechnya war Kadyrov rose to a position of mufti, the spiritual head of the Muslim community, and announced a holy war Jihad against Russia. But later he broke with other rebel leaders, blaming them for over-reliance on foreign help.

He openly sided with the Kremlin and was soon appointed head of the Moscow-installed administration by Putin, who strived to minimize Russia's military involvement in Chechnya and encourage Chechens to solve Chechen problems.

KADYROV

Kadyrov proved to be an ideal instrument. He stayed loyal without seeming slavish and managed to persuade many rebel commanders and rank-and-file fighters to lay down their arms.

His son Ramzan created a powerful military force which dealt with unrepentant rebels, in many cases replacing Russian forces.

Initial reaction from Putin's camp to Kadyrov's death showed that he would find it hard to continue attempts to let Chechens run Chechnya.

Lyubov Sliska, first deputy parliamentary speaker from the pro-Kremlin United Russia party, told Interfax agency she favored introducing direct presidential rule in Chechnya.

Nationalists from the Rodina (Motherland) bloc echoed this.

"I would advise the federal leadership to introduce direct presidential rule in Chechnya and appoint a plenipotentiary envoy there," Rodina leader Dmitry Rogozin said. *Reuters*

Sharon promises new version of rejected Gaza pullout plan

JERUSALEM—Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon vowed Sunday to reformulate a Gaza pullback plan rejected by his own party last week and announced he was canceling a trip to Washington to give him time to present the new version to ministers by the end of the month.

But in a potent reminder of how difficult his task will be, a Palestinian gunman was killed after opening fire on a memorial in the Gaza Strip for a pregnant Israeli settler killed with her four children.

Observers said the settler killings were instrumental in convincing many Likud members to reject Sharon's plan.

Sharon told ministers at their weekly meeting that he intended to put the new proposals to a cabinet vote, public radio reported, without giving details of what they were likely to contain.

Sharon was expected in Washington on May 14-15 to speak at the annual meeting of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPIC) lobby group, which is traditionally attended by the US president.

But there has been mounting speculation that he would pull out after Likud members rejected the pullback plan, which was controversially endorsed by US President George W. Bush during Sharon's last visit to the White House in April.

At Sunday's Cabinet meeting, ministers had been expected to present a range of options on the way forward after Justice Minister Yossi Lapid of the centrist Shinui party requested a debate.

Lapid was expected to propose a more limited pullback, leaving an Israeli military presence inside the Gaza Strip.

Under the original plan, Israel would have retained control only of Gaza's airspace and territorial waters along with an expanded buffer zone on the border with Egypt.

Immediately after the Cabinet session, Sharon met with his Likud rival, Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, to discuss ways of moving the political process forward.

There was no official comment on the content of the meeting, at which Netanyahu was expected to warn Sharon he should respect the Likud vote and not act against the party's wishes.

Despite the opposition, the hawkish premier appeared determined to plough ahead with his pullback plan, which in its original form would have seen Israel evacuating all 21 Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip and four more in the West Bank.

"Under any agreement that is reached, Gaza will be evacuated," Haaretz quoted him as saying Friday.

But violence continued to rage in the territory, as at least one Palestinian was killed in an exchange of fire with Israeli soldiers during the remembrance ceremony.

"The soldiers fired back after two armed Palestinians fired on Jews who came to pray at the site of an attack committed a week ago on the main Kissufim road, and the body of one of them disguised as a woman was later found," an Israeli army spokesperson said.

"The army is searching the area to try to find the body of the second Palestinian who was apparently wounded," he said.

Some 300 Jewish settlers had gathered for the ceremony on the road leading to the Gush Katif settlement bloc when the Palestinians opened fire on them, without causing casualties.

In a separate incident in the West Bank north of Jerusalem, a 19-year-old Palestinian man was shot dead by Israeli soldiers, according to hospital sources and witnesses.

Palestinian prime minister Ahmed Qorei meanwhile met ministers from the Palestinian committee for dealing with the aftermath of any unilateral Israel pullback, a source in his office said.

"The meeting was part of the ongoing discussion about how to prepare for the withdrawal—in economic, political and social terms," Palestinian negotiations minister Saeb Erakat said after the meeting in the West Bank city of Ramallah. *AFP*

Imam among 5 terror suspects preparing for suicide bombings

ROME—Italian anti-terrorist police arrested five suspected Islamic extremists Sunday, including an imam, saying they were preparing to leave Italy to carry out suicide bombing missions against Western targets in Iraq.

Police said the Algerian-born imam and four Tunisian nationals were arrested in Florence and nearby Siena during an antiterrorist operation carried out across Tuscany and Liguria in the early hours of Sunday.

They said the men belonged to the outlawed Ansar al-Islam group and provided logistical support to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

"We have dismantled a cell of Ansar al-Islam," said Genoa police chief Oscar Fiorolli, whose officers carried out the operation.

The leader of the group was named Mahamri Rashid, a 34-year-old imam of one of Florence's two mosques.

Prosecutors said the four Tunisians, all aged in their 20s, had been planning to leave for Iraq via Syria and Yemen in the next few days.

They were there to make contact with other Ansar al-Islam extremists who were to supply them with weapons and explosives and help them enter Iraq to carry out suicide bombings, according to prosecutors.

Sunday's arrests were the latest in a series of detentions of mostly north African immigrants made by Italian police since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks in the United States.

Prosecutors believe Italy has long been used as a logistical base for al-Qaida in Europe. Some of those arrested have been convicted of terrorist offenses.

However, a Muslim leader Sunday pointed out that many of those arrested amid huge publicity are later quietly released for lack of evidence.

"We're tired of these stories. We're exasperated by this climate of alarm over a threat which doesn't exist, or at least, not in these terms," said Homza Roberto Piccardo, national secretary of the Union of Islamic Communities in Italy.

He cited the case of 28 Pakistani immigrants arrested in Naples two years ago on suspicion of plotting to kill a Nato admiral but later released.

In another case, an Italian court last month acquitted nine Moroccans accused of plotting an attack on the US Embassy in Rome.

The five men arrested Sunday—all legally resident in Italy—were later moved from Florence's police headquarters to the Tuscan city's Sollicciano prison, suspected of "subversive association for terrorist ends."

Police said a total of 14 searches had been carried out in Florence, Siena and nearby Prato as part of the pre-dawn operation. *AFP*

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Date/Time	Subject Classification/ MCLE Credit Units (CU)	Lecturer	Subject
May 15, 2004 8:00 -10:00 am	Legal Writing & Oral Advocacy (2 CU)	Justice Magdangal M. De Leon *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*	Oral Advocacy
May 15, 2004 10:15 -12:15 pm	International Law (2 CU)	Atty. Ronaldo P. Ledesma *Head, Board of Special Inquiry, BI*	International Law and the Admission of Aliens
May 15, 2004 1:00 – 3:00 pm	Updates in Substantive & Procedural Laws& Jurisprudence (2CU)	Justice Diosdado M. Peralta *Associate Justice, Sandiganbayan*	Updates in Criminal Law
May 15, 2004 3:15 – 6:15 pm	Updates in Substantive & Procedural Laws & Jurisprudence (3 CU)	Justice Regalado E. Maambong *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*	Updates in Constitutional Law and Election Law
May 22, 2004 8:00 –10:00 am	Updates in Substantive & Procedural laws & Jurisprudence (2 CU)	Dean Froilan M. Bacungan *Former Dean, UP College of Law*	Updates in Labor Law
May 22, 2004 10:15-12:15 pm	Trial & Pre-Trial Skills (2CU)	Justice Noel G. Tijam *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*	Pre-Trial Skills: Civil & Criminal Cases
May 22, 2004 1:00 - 3:00 pm	Trial & Pre-Trial Skills (2CU)	Justice Edilberto G. Sandoval *Associate Justice, Sandiganbayan*	Trial Technique: The Art of Direct & Cross Examination
May 22, 2004 3:15 - 6:15 pm	Alternative Dispute Resolution (3 CU)	Prof. Mario Valderrama *Commercial Arbitrator*	Alternative Dispute Resolution
May 29, 2004 8:00 – 10:00 am	Alternative Dispute Resolution (2 CU)	Dean Custodio O. Parlade *Commercial Arbitrator*	International & Domestic Arbitration
May 29, 2004 10:15-12:15 pm	Legal Writing & Oral Advocacy (2 CU)	Justice Hugo E. Gutierrez *Associate Justice, SC (Ret.)*	Legal Writing
May 29, 2004 1:00 – 4:00 pm	Legal Ethics (3 CU)	Justice Hector L. Hofileña *Associate Justice, CA (Ret.)*	Updates in Legal Ethics
May 29, 2004 4:15 – 6:15 pm	Updates in Substantive & Procedural Laws & Jurisprudence (2 CU)	Justice Ruben T. Reyes *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*	Updates in Procedural Law Jurisprudence
June 5, 2004 8:00 – 10:00 am	MCLE-Prescribed Subject: Environmental Law (2 CU)	Atty. Antonio Oposa *IBP Chairperson – National Environmental Action Team*	Environmental Law
June 5, 2004 10:15 – 12:15 pm	MCLE-Prescribed Subject: Law and Economics (2 CU)	Prof. Harry Roque, Jr. *UP – College of Law*	Law and Economics
June 5, 2004 1:00 – 4:00 pm	Legal Ethics (3 CU)	Justice Ruben T. Reyes *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*	Problem Areas in Legal Ethics
June 5, 2004 4:15 – 6:15 pm	MCLE-Prescribed Subject: Law & Technology (2 CU)	Justice Regalado E. Maambong *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*	Essentials of Forensic Ballistics, Questioned Documents & Fingerprinting
TOTAL	36		

Date/Day/Time: May 15, 22, 29 and June 05, 2004, Saturday, from 8:00 am to 6:15 pm
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New photos, films of US abuse set for release

WASHINGTON—US officials are struggling over how best to release the next wave of disturbing photographs, and possibly video films, depicting the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by US soldiers at Abu Ghraib prison outside Baghdad.

US magazines on Sunday published graphic new revelations on the behavior of US military guards behind Abu Ghraib's walls, including one photo showing a naked prisoner cowering under threat from two US military dogs.

Former prisoners seeing their torment broadcast around the world told Time magazine that inmates at Abu Ghraib, which held men, women and teenage prisoners, suffered beatings, sexual abuse and rape.

The US military announced the first court martial proceeding Sunday against Specialist Jeremy Sivits scheduled for May 19, as lawmakers in Washington sought a way to resolve the growing scandal while working to rebuild America's reputation overseas.

Sen. John Warner, the Republican chief of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said the Pentagon had assured him that digital photographs would be given to lawmakers but kept classified for the time being.

"They assured me that all the information will be forthcoming to the Congress, but it will be on disc, it will be kept in our room ... because it is of a classified nature," Warner told NBC television.

"When it may get into the public domain, I'm not able to answer that question," he said.

However, newly released images were obtained by The New Yorker magazine, which released a picture showing a naked prisoner under threat from two US military dogs and their handlers.

The latest picture of events inside Abu Ghraib, which was formerly used by Saddam Hussein to torture and execute Iraqis, was given to the magazine by a member of the 320th Military Police Battalion.

"Another photograph is a closeup of the naked prisoner, from his waist to his ankles, lying on the floor. On his right thigh is what appears to be a bite or a deep scratch. There is another larger wound on his left leg covered in blood," New Yorker journalist Seymour Hersh wrote.

The photograph was released as The New York Times published a montage of six photographs on its front page, many released earlier this week, depicting abused Iraqis, and including one dead man laying in an unzipped body bag.

A top secret internal military investigation into the abuses by Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba, that was leaked to the US media, had detailed acts including the "videotaping and photographing (of) naked male and female detainees." *AFP*

Iraq-Vietnam parallels heightening

By Peter Mackler

WASHINGTON—While most people here still recoil from comparisons of Iraq and Vietnam, the political parallels are piling up between the wrenching wars that have sharply divided two generations of Americans.

Few suggest Iraq has reached the same military proportion. But its disputed origins, a surprisingly resilient local resistance, and now repugnant abuses by US troops all recall the trauma of the distant jungle conflict.

Photographs of hooded and naked Iraqi prisoners abused by US guards have triggered a wave of revulsion not seen here since the Indochina campaign, alarming one-time staunch supporters of the desert war.

"We risk losing public support for this conflict," influential Republican Sen. John McCain, himself a prisoner in Vietnam, told an emotionally charged congressional hearing Friday.

"As Americans turned away from the Vietnam War, they may turn away from this one, unless this issue is quickly resolved with full disclosure immediately," McCain said.

Polls show nearly half of Americans now feel the invasion was not worth it, and 62 percent believe the occupation is going badly. Yet the public is still resisting equating the embattled occupation with Vietnam.

A Pew Research Center survey published last month before the prison scandal broke found only 25 percent feared Iraq would become another Vietnam war, which claimed 58,000 US lives between 1961 and 1973.

But officials and analysts still see disturbing links between the conflicts.

Both sprang from dubious provocations: in Vietnam it was disputed North Vietnamese attacks in the Gulf of Tonkin; in Iraq it was the weapons of mass destruction that were never found.

In 1968 a daring Tet offensive convinced US commanders in Vietnam that they were up against a resourceful and determined foe. US occupation forces in Iraq learned the same lesson last month in the battle of Fallujah.

And if the 1968 massacre of hundreds of Vietnamese in the village of My Lai highlighted the ugly side of US military adventurism, it has been matched by the burgeoning scandal at Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison.

Secretary of State Colin Powell, once the nation's top general, raised eyebrows last week when he voluntarily compared Abu Ghraib to My Lai. But analysts say the prison debacle may be worse in some respects.

John Mueller, a political science professor and author who has written two books on war and public opinion, said that while My Lai was horrific, it was an extension of the basic US "search and destroy" mission.

"Going into Iraq, however, the idea is not to kill, not to humiliate, not to murder Iraqis," said Mueller, who teaches at Ohio State University. "We're trying to clean up Iraq from this kind of disaster."

"This is just so disgusting and off the charts," he said. "It just plays to everything, the humiliation of these men, the whole issue of pornography and the argument that all the West wants to do is make it into one large brothel."

Evocations of Indochina carry heavy political overtones in a presidential election year, and when Sen. Ted Kennedy called Iraq "George Bush's Vietnam" last month, he drew a stinging rebuke from the president.

"I think the analogy is false," Bush said. "I also happen to think that analogy sends the wrong message to our troops and sends a wrong message to the enemy."

But even army officers are now starting to go public with doubts whether the United States may be winning a series of battles in Iraq but losing the overall war just like in Vietnam.

"Unless we ensure that we have coherency in our policy, we will lose strategically," Col. Paul Hughes, who last year directed strategic planning for the occupation authority in Baghdad, told the Washington Post.

Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry, a decorated Vietnam war veteran who has been hammering Bush on his Iraq policy, said last month that Iraq "is not Vietnam yet."

"I underscore yet," the Massachusetts senator added. *AFP*

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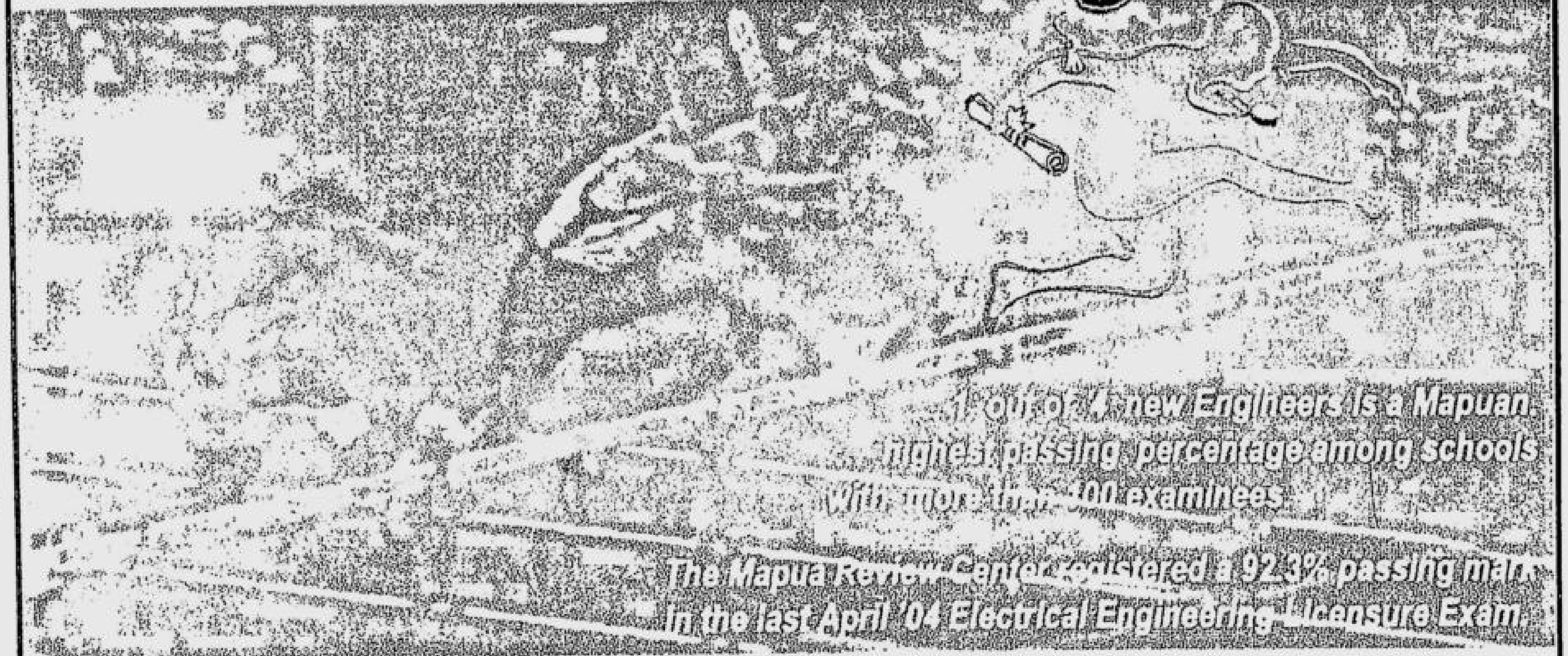
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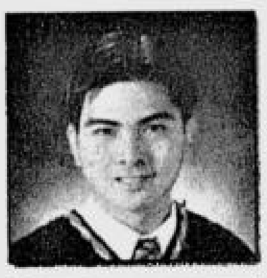
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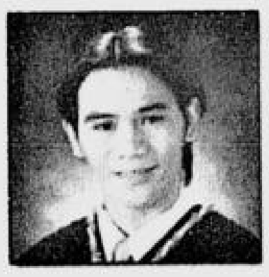
90.47%, 1st place

Randy S. de Guzman
90.45%, 2nd place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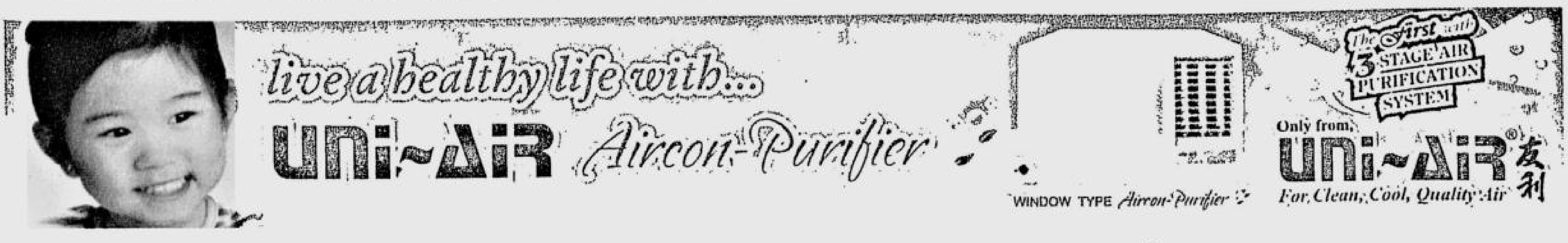
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2 foreigners stoned to death in Kabul

KABUL—Two foreign men, one Swiss, were stabbed and stoned to death in the Afghan capital, government officials said on Sunday.

"There were various injuries you could see on the head caused by stones and bricks," said Ihsanullah Alimi, a doctor involved in the post-mortem.

"And there are also stab injuries on the head. And on one body, a rope seemed to have been tightened on the neck."

The bodies, clothed in local shalwar (baggy trousers), long shirts and woollen hats when found, were being examined by forensic experts.

Local residents informed police and led them to the bodies in Baghe Chilstone, an ancient garden not far from the city's center, interior ministry spokesperson Lutfullah Mashal, said.

An investigation was under way to determine "who stoned these to death, and why," Mashal said. "One of them holds a Swiss passport and the nationality of the other is not known."

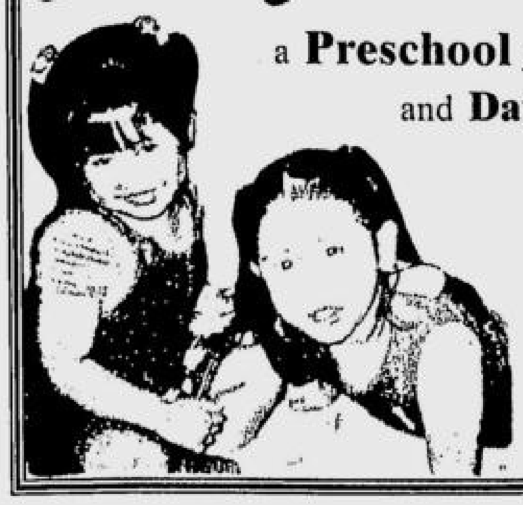
Both had come from neighboring Pakistan nine days ago, said Khalil Aminzada, deputy chief of Kabul police. He said they were pelted with bricks and stones last night.

A local official at the Swiss Embassy in Kabul said Swiss diplomats were informed about the deaths and were seeking more details from the authorities.

Stoning to death is a punishment proposed by Islam for adulterers. The practice was publicly administered by the ousted Taliban who ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001 when a US-led military campaign overthrew the radical regime.

Taliban remnants are active in southern and eastern parts of Afghanistan, where more than 700 people including aid workers, civilians, government and US-led troops and militants have been killed since last August.

The deaths, mostly blamed on the militants, also include several attacks on the Nato-led foreign peacekeepers in Kabul. *Reuters*



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Even dogs wear armor in risky Iraq

BAGHDAD—On dangerous missions, Sgt. Darren Smith straps a bulletproof vest around the furry chest of his partner, a bomb-sniffing dog named Kastor.

Patrols and checkpoints in Iraq have become so risky that the US Army is issuing bulletproof vests, not just to its soldiers, but also to bomb-sniffing dogs to protect them too from roadside bombs and drive-by shootings.

"We need to protect our dogs just like we protect our people," said Staff Sgt. Jarrod Zaleski, the Army kennel master in Iraq. "This is still considered a war situation."

The US Army has some 30 dogs in Iraq, guarding bases and checking cars for explosives. Zaleski says the dogs have uncovered car bombs and have such sensitive noses that one was able to smell an ammunition clip in a woman's pocketbook.

With violence escalating, the Army shipped vests for all of its dogs to Iraq about two weeks ago. War dogs in Afghanistan already have the vests. Soldiers have worn vests since the start of the invasion of Iraq in March 2003.

"Anything we can do to keep him safe is well worth it," said Smith, a military policeman who searches buildings and works at checkpoints with Kastor, a red and yellow Belgian Malinois, a dog that looks like a small German Shepherd.

Smith and Kastor man checkpoints near the US headquarters in Baghdad and sometimes are sent out to other areas of Baghdad that are potentially more dangerous.

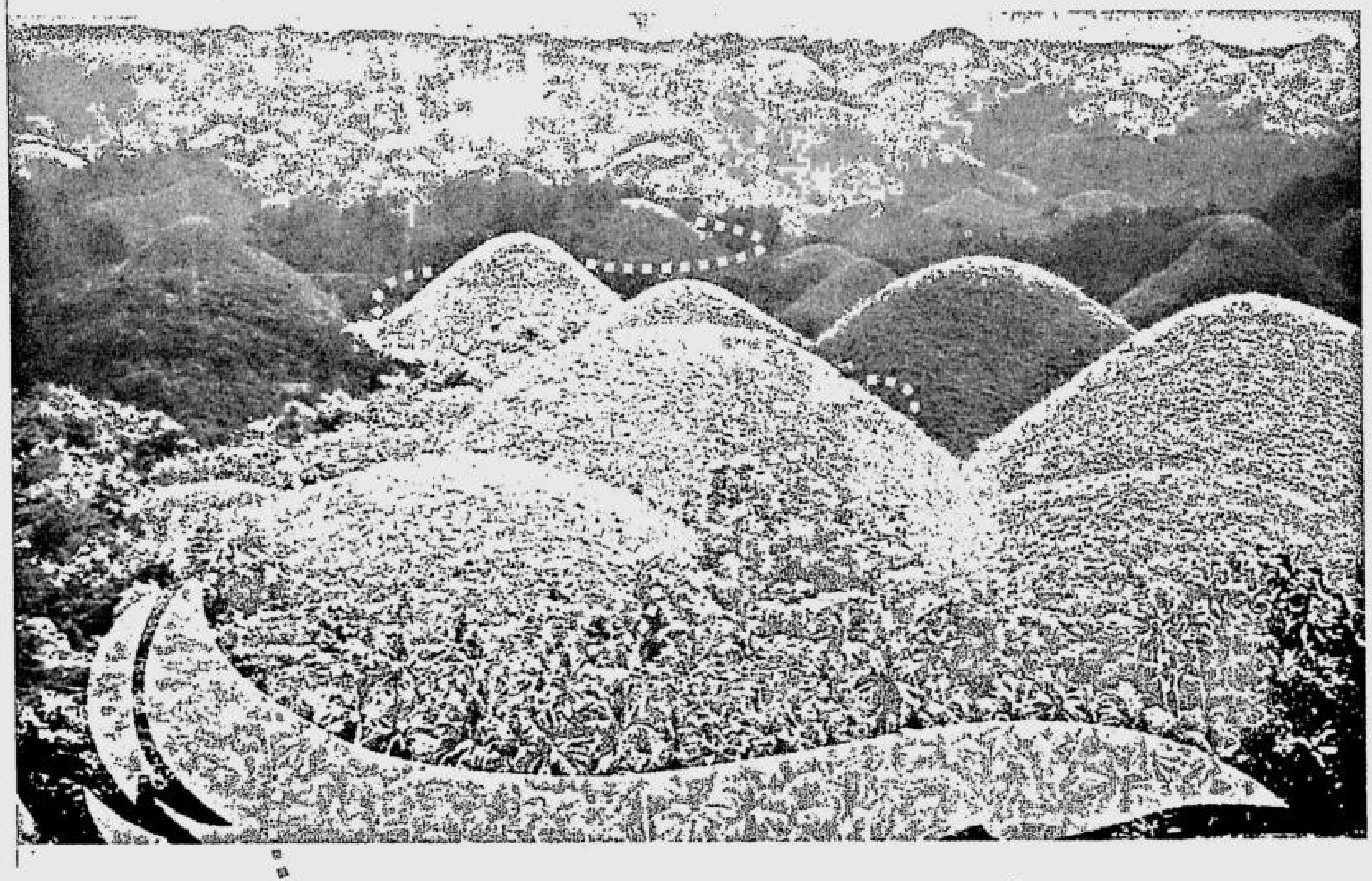
The tan and green camouflage vest covers Kastor's body, leaving only his head, neck and his hind legs exposed.

Zaleski said no dogs have been killed in Iraq although several have suffered injuries to their paws while walking through debris or shattered glass.

On some missions the dogs are now equipped with padded boots to protect their paws from getting cut up.

"Someone just needs to come up with a helmet for dogs and we'd be good," quipped Zaleski.

Keeping the dogs safe is important. *AP*



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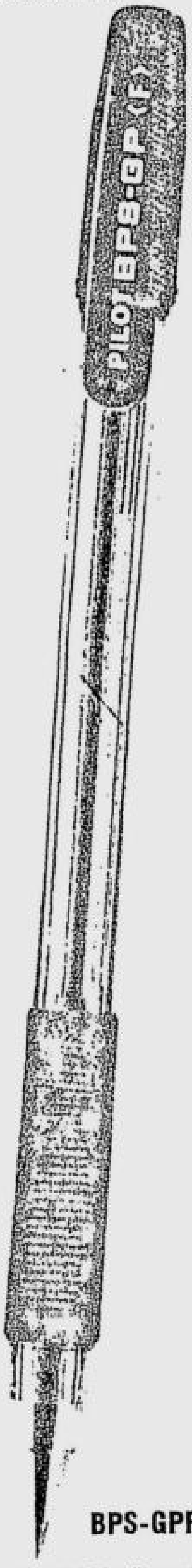

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EDITORIALS

Crazy

IT has been an unremarkable election campaign. No, let us take that back: it has been a remarkable election campaign—remarkable for its lack of intelligent debate, for its paucity of discussion of the relevant issues, for the overspending by the candidates, for the blatant and unrestrained violation of the laws and rules, for the scores of cases of election-related violence and for the general silliness of the campaign gimmicks (Imagine a GMA look-alike contest; why not a mumble-alike contest?).

But we're glad this crazy season is over. And we will be even happier when the counting is over and the winners are declared after an election that we hope will be considered credible. We hope there will be a minimum of cases of election-related killings and shootings and a minimum of cases of ballot-snatching, cheating, intimidation and the other usual things that make elections a weird political orgy in this country. After this we hope we can go on with our lives.

There was no full debate among the major candidates because months ago, the leading candidate then refused to participate in one, saying that it was useless and divisive. There was no discussion of relevant but sensitive or controversial issues because most of the candidates wanted to play it safe. They did not want to antagonize some of the major pressure groups that were closely watching the electoral campaign and the elections, such as the Catholic Church.

As usual, candidates for national offices overspent in their campaigns. The presidential candidates, judging from the TV and radio ads that they aired, must certainly have spent much, much more than the total P4.5 million that the winner would get in salaries in his or her entire six-year term. The same was true of the senatorial, congressional, gubernatorial and mayoral candidates; they spent much, much more than they would hope to get in salaries for their entire terms. How will the winners and losers recoup their expenses?

What took the place of an intelligent and serious discussion of the issues were the usual gimmicks like song-and-dance numbers, skits by the clowns and comedians (we are referring to some of the candidates, not to the professionals), replays of movies and the use of memorable one-liners from some movie hits, etc., etc., ad nauseam.

Are Filipino voters forever condemned to this kind of election campaigns? When will the level of political discourse improve? Are intellectuals misfits in the electoral landscape of the Philippines?

True grit

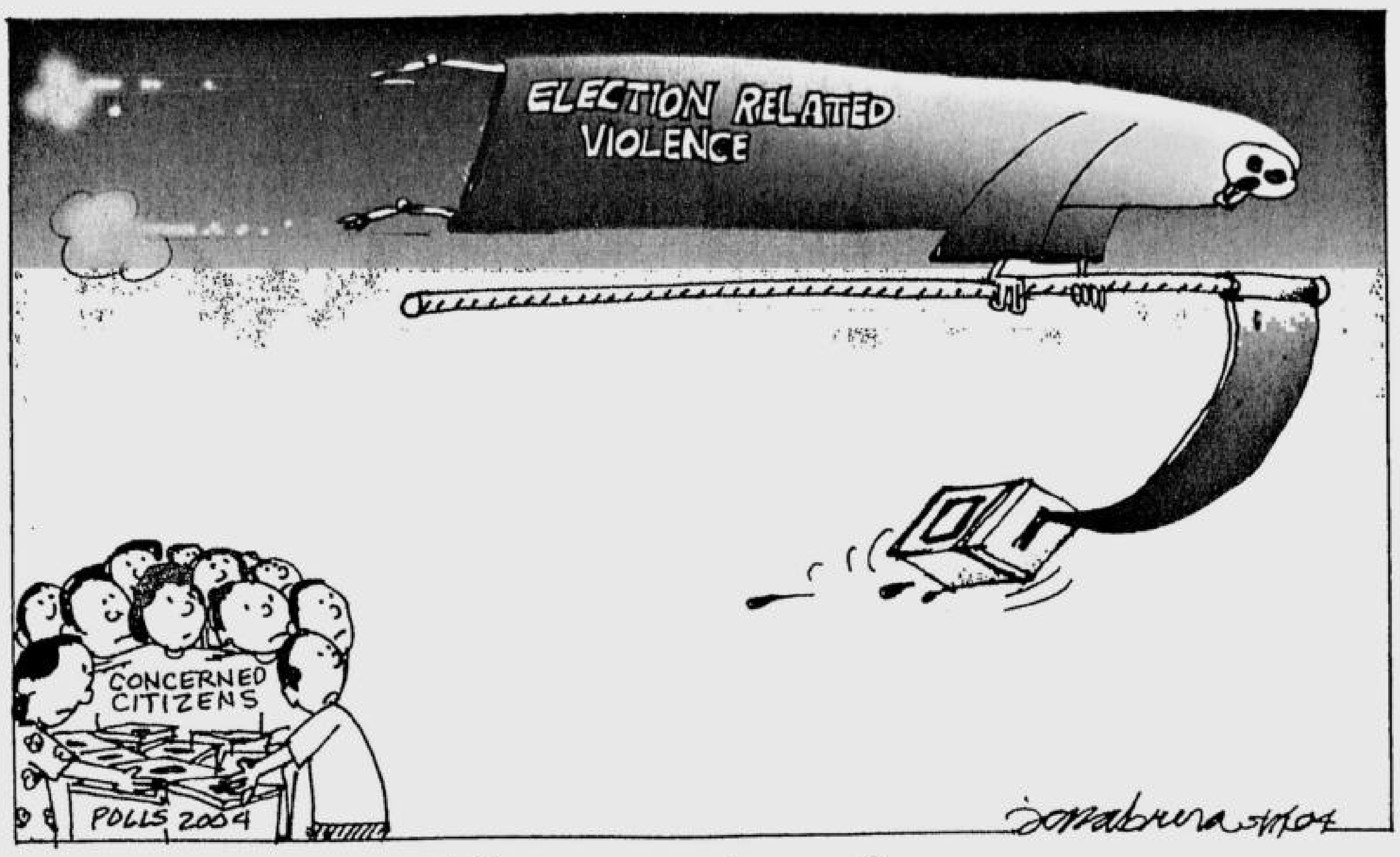
WE wuz robbed, the camp of people's featherweight champion Manny Pacquiao said after the slambang slugfest at the MGM Grand Hotel arena last Sunday (Saturday in Las Vegas).

Filipinos who watched the fight in Las Vegas as well as those who watched it on TV in the Philippines echoed their cry. Had the fight been judged correctly, we would now have a double world featherweight champion in Pacquiao.

But there are others who said that the decision of a draw between Pacquiao and Juan Manuel Marquez was possibly fair, considering that the former absorbed more blows (158) than the latter (148). Also, Marquez connected more power punches, 122, to Pacquiao's 100. Pacquiao could have followed up the three knockdowns that he scored in the first round but failed to do so in the succeeding rounds. The reason was given after the fight: he had hurt his left fist, limiting his hitting power, and developed a blister on his right toe that ruined his balance.

Pacquiao may not have won the double championship but in the eyes of the Filipino people he is a true champion. He is the personification of true grit and courage. Despite the injuries he suffered—a swollen fist and a blistered foot—he fought on, never relaxing his guard or letting up on his attack. He absorbed everything that Marquez dished out to him and in return gave him punishing blows that bloodied the champion's nose and spattered his white trunks with splotches of blood.

The City of Manila will give Pacquiao a hero's welcome upon his return. He really deserves it. Pacquiao has shown the world that a Filipino can be the personification of true grit and courage. Three cheers for Manny Pacquiao!



The morning after

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

TODAY is the morning after a most protracted election campaign. Parish Council for Responsible Voting members guided us through muddled voters' lists Monday. After a few minutes' delay over still-undelivered padlocks, voting started. At voting stalls, many agonized in choosing between what social scientist John Kenneth Gailbraith calls "the disastrous and the unpalatable."

In countries like Canada or Malaysia, complete election results are announced the "morning after." Here, the next day means the stretched-out manual count, so vulnerable to fraud, begins.

This primitive tally results from a culture that devalues obligatory laws into mere suggestions. Luzviminda Tancangco was almost impeached precisely because the Commission on Elections then blithely treated the Election Modernization Act as, well, a recommendation.

Adherence to the law's provisions, the "Gang of Four" apparently believed, was elective; penalties, if any, were negotiable. Thus, they awarded a P6.5-billion contract to Photokina on a budget of P1.2 billion. The Supreme Court trashed that one. The Court later spiked a contract for substandard Mega-Pacific computers. The evil that men do can live long after retirement.

"If Moses had been Pinoy, he would have swooped down from Mount Sinai with the Ten Suggestions," UP College of Law Dean Raul Pangalangan writes. "Filipinos are rule-burdened but not rule-bound... We speak legalistically but choose viscerally. We romanticize the rule of law in grand rhetoric, and subvert it in day-to-day workings by ad hoc compromises."

Some legislators can be the most disdainful of the law. The House committee on justice derailed the Tancangco impeachment on technicalities. Led by Rep. Ronaldo Zamora, members refused to explain their opposition, as required by their rules. They disappeared from the House when the vote was called.

We all buckle up, meanwhile, for uncertainty in "the morning after." In this country, no one concedes losing an election. Losers invariably scream fraud. The late Ramon Mitra was a graceful exception.

Given the absence of accurate computerized counts, the days ahead could be lethal. "Indeed, you won the elections but I won the count," the Guardian quoted dictator Anastacio Somoza telling his opponent after the 1977 Nicaraguan elections. Ferdinand Marcos, honed Somoza's skill to perfection—until People Power I nailed him.

Thus, the call by Cardinal Ricardo Vidal, Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales and Bishop Fernando Capalla to guard the count until proclamation merits support.

The New People's Army can't be bothered by elections. Too busy counting its take from permit-to-campaigns?

No one welcomes continued political brawling. That would only invite Honasan-style caudillos to intervene. Hopefully, uncertainty can be shortened, as in the past, by the National Movement for Free Elections' "Quick Count."

Travel plans for medical diagnosis, meanwhile, are on hold. Fugitives like Jamie Dichavez, former police officers Michael Ray Aquino and Cesar Mancao, implicated in the Bobby Dacer rubout, are unlikely to fly in soon. But some businessmen, who vamoosed for abroad, with families and checkbooks as the campaign moved into homestretch, are trickling back.

In the days ahead, Joseph Estrada's kneecaps will crumble—or heal for good—depending on who Congress proclaims in the official canvass. Where in the world does a medical diagnosis hinge on election tallies? *Onli in da Pilipins.*

There's the "morning after" litter of posters to be swept, remains of failed "no-el prophets" to be buried, rising yelps from losers—and the unsettled bill. Then what?

The bill. The tab: *kiptang* in Thai. There's no "free lunch." The chit for a fiesta since December is being called. Critical problems that festered while we partied have emerged with a vengeance. Whoever is proclaimed has work cut out: from a debt crisis, a stagnant economy to chronic hunger and shoddy schools, plus a surplus of second-generation predators symbolized by the congressional "Brat Pack."

Congress refused to enact a new budget for 2004, enabling fund juggling. Only after the dust settles will we see how much this splurge cost us. There's little to fund infrastructure, which chokes off needed growth. Repayment of debts—foreign IOUs top $57.4 billion—prunes 33 centavos out of every peso. That ensures stagnation—even as fuel prices threaten to bolt and power shortages reemerge.

Development is a no parking street. Idling is backsliding. Since the Asian financial crisis, growth never edged beyond 4 to 5 percent, too low to pull ahead of population. At the rate malnutrition is addressed, it'll take 50 years to contain, say updates of national studies.

We didn't need the Gallup Organization of American Corporations survey to tell us our workforce is losing its competitive edge in English. Read a restaurant menu and weep : "We Hab Sop Drink In Batols."

In the "morning after," the new leaders must unify a fractured country for a troubled journey. "If our ship of state continues to be, in the words of T.S. Eliot, 'a drifting boat with a slow leakage,' people will lose confidence, not only in government, but in themselves," historian Horacio de la Costa warned in "Philippine Institutions in Historical Perspective."

"They'd no longer be content to be forever bailing... They will not long be persuaded to make a trip that will not be unpayable, for a haul that will not bear examination."

* * *

(*E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph*)

Malay pride

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I DELIBERATELY did not search the Web for news of the Paquiao-Marquez fight, which I knew would already have been known by lunchtime. I wanted to savor every moment of the fight on a hot Sunday afternoon.

The afternoon turned out to be cloudy, and it rained afterward. And my self-induced suspense was promptly broken by a dozen text messages from well-wishers who told me how it ended. One went on to describe how the fight went: Manny Pacquiao knocked down Manuel Marquez three times in the first round but Marquez came back to reclaim the fight. The Web you can escape, the cell phone, alas, it is now as implacable as Javert.

Still, the fight turned out to be thrilling. Though there were ample moments when it felt like an exercise in frustration, if you were a Filipino.

I had my misgivings about Pacquiao being able to beat Marquez. It wasn't just that Marquez was the bigger fighter and had fast hands. It was that he had something to send the adrenaline pulsing through the veins: a burning desire for revenge. Pacquiao hadn't just beaten Marquez's compatriot, Antonio Barrera, Pacquiao had demolished him. He had crushed Mexican pride, a macho pride that has few equals in the world. Marquez needed to restore it. He wasn't going to be easy to put away.

Interestingly, I also read an article last Saturday from Nick Giongco suggesting that if history was at least something to go by, fate might not be on the side of Pacquiao. The article said: "It was almost at this time 22 years ago when another Filipino pug, the heavy-handed Rolando Navarrete, took a trip to this gambling haven to defend his World Boxing Council (WBC) super featherweight title against Rafael 'Bazooka' Limon.

"There are more eerie similarities than just the date.

"Like Navarrete, Pacquiao is from General Santos City and is a southpaw. And like his controversial province mate, Pacquiao traveled to this popular tourist destination in the month of May to face a Mexican with a world title on the line.

"If history repeats itself, the 25-year-old Filipino boxing hero is bound to fall to reigning IBF and WBA featherweight king Juan Manuel Marquez."

I wasn't particularly alarmed by this. I am not a very superstitious man, and Giongco's article itself went on to say that Pacquiao himself had always confounded his detractors anyway. He had defied the odds and managed to stay on his feet—and quite magnificently so. Fates are written in hearts—and fists, in the case of boxing—and not in stars. But that was the part that worried me. When I wrote about Pacquiao's destruction of Barrera last November, comparing it to Edsa, I also wondered if, like Edsa, Pacquiao would not rise to heights of glory only to fall to depths of mediocrity soon afterward. It is a national flaw. We are not unable to rise to heights of greatness, we are merely unable to sustain it.

The culprit in the case of sports is the proneness of our athletes to fall into an indulgent lifestyle following success. That was what felled Navarette long before Limon's fists rained on his face in the 13th round of their fight and stopped him dead in his tracks. I wondered if the same thing would not happen to Pacquiao.

Pacquiao answered the question well enough in the first round of the fight. After a wobbly start, he brought the Mexican crashing to the canvas with booming lefts no less than three times. The three-knockdown rule not being in effect, Marquez survived the round, but not before the crowd was on its feet sensing blood, chanting Pacquiao's name. If I hadn't heard the result beforehand, I would have thought the fight would be over soon. I cursed Globe and Smart.

As it turned out, that would be the best part of the fight for Pacquiao. Later, analysts would say that if one of the judges had scored the first round 10-6, as was customary in three knockdowns, and not 10-7, Pacquiao would have won by split decision. But that is hair-splitting. Credit Marquez too for getting back on his feet after that humiliating start and not just managing to survive the onslaught but turning the fight around. I thought he pretty much controlled things most of the way, setting the pace and landing the better shots. Without the three knockdowns in the first round, Pacquiao would have been in trouble.

It wasn't quite another Edsa. I had hoped like many Filipinos that Pacquiao would snatch a grand victory, another miracle to give us hope we can always unleash our potential, we can be rewarded at the end of heroic striving. We needed it on the eve of elections that offered little respite, that had a fourth of the voting population feeling tepidly about their choices, that promised that whoever won would only inherit an empty coffer and an emptier horizon. Alas, it was not to be.

But it did offer a glimmer of hope. Las Vegas was pretty much Marquez territory, the Mexicans coming out full force to cheer their champion. And you looked at the two fighters, you wondered how Marquez ever managed to beat the scales. The word, "diminutive," has always been used to describe Pacquiao, and nowhere did he look more so than alongside Marquez. But he fought a gallant fight, and that image of him looking triumphantly down on Marquez during the first round will be etched in memory. Marquez never put him down, though he tagged him with a few vicious rights. Half a minute left in the fight, the fans rose on their feet to applaud the two warriors who continued to slug it out to the end.

Pacquiao may not have won the crown from Marquez, but he won something that may have been more valuable than Marquez's titles, something that had eluded him amid talk he brought down a Barrera that was ready to be put to pasture. He had won respect.

Not quite Edsa, but a lot like Mendiola.

Only Cory could have pulled off Sunday's gathering

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IN TIMES of crisis, the Filipino's sense of humor sustains him. These elections have been quite tense, what with reports of power outages in various places and violence here and there. The tension could rise a bit through the next few days of canvassing and transporting of ballots. But the Pinoy's sense of humor shines through in the text messages. One message runs like this: "*Personal na pakiusap sa kaibigan mula sa kapwa kaibigan. Ito po ay tatanawin kong malaking pabor: Paki-boto lang si FPJ sa halalan ngayong Martes!*" Here's another: "*Nagkakagulo sa presinto namin. Di dumating ang* indelible ink. *Minamartilyo na lang ang daliri para mangitim ang kuko. Di na lang ako boboto!*"

* * *

As voters trooped to 250,000 precincts across the nation, they noted that many areas around the voting precincts were flooded with sample ballots. Two weeks prior to the elections, we already witnessed the preoccupation of various candidates with preparing their own sample ballots. Each candidate or political group must have its own sample ballot, because without it the candidate could disappear from the voters' radar screen. It's also in the sample ballot where the junking of candidates occur, with names of some candidates covered by stickers with the names of other candidates being pushed.

* * *

Earlier I wrote about Senate President Frank Drilon's observation in a study that name recall especially of senatorial candidates in various areas is quite low. The study showed that rural voters can only recall the names of four to six senatorial candidates while the more urbanized voters can only recall six to eight names. As the study notes, this reality makes the sample ballot imperative for politicians, the inference being that few voters can come up with their own list of candidates.

But I'm sure many citizens wish our voters were not so dependent on the sample ballot, since it makes the voters look like complete morons, with no minds of their own. One day we all hope to see our elections fully automated, with our voters merely pushing buttons. But this would require automation on the part of the Comelec and a higher degree of education for our citizens. Hope springs eternal that we will get to see the day when this will happen.

* * *

There's a lot of anxiety that the elections be credible, and some pundits have said that one way to ease that anxiety is for President Macapagal-Arroyo to beat her closest rival decisively. The latest SWS survey gave GMA a margin of seven points over FPJ, which her supporters found a bit comforting.

But in the latest issue of Kilosbayan, former Senate President Jovito Salonga argued that margins of victory do not ensure credibility, it's the way elections are conducted, meaning if they're honest and fair. He noted that the landslide victory of President Ferdinand Marcos over Sen. Sergio Osmeña Jr. in 1969 was not regarded as credible owing to widespread perceptions of cheating, whereas the slim margin of 600,00 votes Marcos obtained over President Diosdado Macapagal in 1965 was thought credible. One might also add that Fidel Ramos had only a slim margin of 800,000 over Miriam Defensor-Santiago, and while there were initial allegations about a "Sulo Hotel operation" to make FVR win, these died down eventually and his victory was accepted.

* * *

We can only hope and pray that the current elections are honest and credible and all citizens should help ensure that they are so. For yesterday's elections, millions of citizens, including brave media people, the police and the AFP and, of course, the teachers, made sure everything ran smoothly in the various precincts, despite the traditional confusion over missing voters' names, etc. Now their preoccupation has shifted to having credible counting and canvassing. They are the heroes of the elections.

* * *

The sight of five presidential candidates praying together for clean and honest elections last Sunday at San Agustin Church was most reassuring. Especially calming was the photo of the candidates linking hands as they sang "Ama Namin." The electorate will certainly hold the presidential candidates to the common prayer they recited before the altar, which said in part: "Let no one dare to substitute with one's own the voice of the people that is also Yours (the Lord's). Give me the humility to accept the true outcome, whether it goes for or against me, so that defeat be gloried by grace, and victory be tempered with modesty..."

* * *

Credit for gathering all the five presidential candidates for the Mass for peaceful elections goes to former President Cory Aquino and Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales. But it was undeniably Cory's moral stature that drew them. Her refusal to officially endorse any presidential candidate paid off, even though it was common knowledge that majority of the Aquino family were with GMA in one way or another. Had Cory endorsed any candidate, that gathering wouldn't have been possible.

* * *

That part in the candidates' prayer about having "the humility to accept the true outcome, whether it goes for or against me" is admittedly the hardest to do. Citizens hope that all the candidates down to the lowest posts would emulate the example of the presidential contenders and accept the "true outcome" of the polls with humility. But it has been noted over and over that Filipino candidates feel they would lose face among their followers if they admitted defeat, and so they invariably cry that they have been cheated. Still accepting defeat would be easier if the elections were perceived to be fair and honest.

A ready-made program of government

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

WE brought a first-time voter with us yesterday, our 18-year old daughter, and we were quite excited for her. When she finally stepped out of the precinct, her right forefinger bearing the telltale indelible ink stain, I congratulated her, saying: "You're now officially a citizen of the Republic!"

"I've always been a citizen!" she retorted. "What was I before this, a puppy?"

That silenced me and set me reflecting. She was right, of course. Filipinos below the age of 18 may not have the capacity to cast their own votes, but surely they were present at the polling booths yesterday. After all, the decisions we make today—specifically, the names we wrote down yesterday—will really have an impact not on our futures but on that of the young today. So I hope young people were present in the precincts with us, in spirit and in our consciences.

* * *

IN CASE there are winning candidates out there who at this late date still have no idea what program of government they are to adopt, and what programs they will pursue in the next three or six years, may I suggest a ready-made list of priorities that governments around the world, the Philippines included, have agreed on?

In 2000, leaders of countries around the world (we were represented by President Joseph Estrada) met and signed, at the end of the Millennium Summit, the Millennium Development Goals or MDGs, eight key goals that, if met, the signatories hoped, would have a significant impact on the lives of the world's poor and destitute.

The MDGs are quite specific in terms of goals and projected results and adhere to a strict timeline: signatories set the year 2015 for the achievement of these goals. They may look daunting, but since the problems they seek to address are largely man-made, created and sustained, then their solutions are decidedly within our grasp.

* * *

HERE are the eight MDGs:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. More specifically, the MDGs seek to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty; halve the proportion of the population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption and halve the proportion of underweight children; halve the proportion of people with no access to safe drinking water or those who cannot afford it by 2015.

2. Achieve universal primary education. This goal seeks not just the "universal" enrollment of children in Grade 1, it must be noted, but also the improvement of the "completion rate," that is, the number of children who stay in school and finish their elementary education. At present, the ratio stands at more than 60 percent.

3. Promote gender equality. More specifically, governments are seeking to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 (next year), and in all levels of education not later than 2015.

4. Reduce child mortality. This goal seeks to reduce the number of deaths of children under five years by two-thirds. Authorities seem confident of achieving this goal, with under-five mortality reduced from 80 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 48 in 1998. Infant mortality, on the other hand, was reduced from 57 in 1990 to 35 in 1998.

5. Improved women's reproductive health. Specifically, to reduce the maternal mortality rate (the number of women dying due to pregnancy and child birth) by three-fourths by 2015. In 1997, the maternal mortality rate stood at 172 per 100,000 live births, an estimated 5,000 deaths per year. Another goal is to increase access to basic reproductive health services to 100 percent by 2015, quite a challenge, considering that the proportion of women availing of family planning services actually declined from 50.7 percent in 1995 to 49.5 percent in 2001.

6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. The goal seeks to "halt and reverse" the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015, as well as "halt and begin to reverse" the incidence of malaria and other major diseases, especially tuberculosis.

7. Ensure environmental sustainability. Two specific areas among the welter of environmental issues have been identified: Implement national strategies for sustainable development by 2005, to reverse the loss of environment resources by 2015; by 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, worldwide. In the Philippines, about 1.3 million "informal settler families" have been identified, 57 percent of them in Metro Manila.

8. Develop a global partnership for development. Two specific goals are: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system; include a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction—both nationally and internationally; and deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debts sustainable in the long-term.

* * *

THE MDGs, it must be noted, apply to governments around the world, for those in developing countries to achieve and for those in wealthier and developed countries to support.

And while specific targets have been set at the national level, the MDGs are quite within the reach of local governments, so that local executives could very well adopt these same goals and contribute what they can to achieve, if not surpass, the national targets.

Citizens and civil society groups might also do well to adopt the MDGs and use these as a matrix against which to measure the performance of officials, especially at the local level. The Manila UNDP office is launching a campaign to "popularize" the MDGs, so officials should no longer have an excuse to say that they are still drafting their priority programs. When at a loss, they can always adopt the MDGs.

Defining moment

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

WE either studied Ferdinand Magellan's voyage as part of the Age of Discovery or as part of a course in Philippine History and the effects of 300 years of Spanish domination (I think the jury is still out on that one). Either way both accounts rendered a one-dimensional portrait of the man. Now comes Laurence Bergreen's "Over the Edge of the World" that presents a much more entertaining, because human, historical account of that journey.

What we don't have are the reactions of the early Filipinos which we can only conjecture. But what we do know is that Magellan's exploration changed the course of history and is in the opinion of many "the most important maritime voyage ever undertaken."

Many things we take for granted today were the stuff of fairy tales to the Europeans who thought the world was flat and the Americas were part of India. To realize what Magellan accomplished, we should be aware that at the time more than half of the world was unexplored, unmapped and misunderstood by Europeans. People actually believed you would fall over the edge of the world if you sailed past the horizon and that monsters populated the waters, waiting to devour them.

What the Age of Exploration was all about was finding a water route to the Indies (which Columbus had failed to do but then again what a fantastic failure!) in order to discover the most priceless commodity of the times—spices—the equivalent of the greed for oil today. Think Afghanistan and Iraq and you get the idea. Spices (also gold and silver) were inextricably intertwined with exploration, conquest and imperialism. If you think about it further, not much has changed although people like to believe the 21st century human is an improvement.

Unlike illustrations of Magellan in our books as a latter-day Brad Pitt, he was old, short and dark. Bartolome de las Casas, historian and missionary, wrote that "he was not of an imposing presence because he was small in stature... and did not appear to be much."

The expedition called "The Armada de Molucca" cost 8,751,125 maravides (1 maravide was worth approximately 12 cents) and consisted of five ships. Four-fifths of the food procured was wine and something called hardtack, which was coarse wheat flour that included the husk, kneaded with hot water and cooked twice. This became a brittle biscuit they called *biscocho* that was stored for a month before it was sold. In the conditions of the ship, it became soft and rotten and was so vile that even starving sailors refused to eat it.

There were other things to eat, of course, including seven cows and three pigs that had to be slaughtered beforehand or they would have eaten a lot of valuable food on board. (You can imagine the stench!) Aside from that, there were barrels of cheese, almonds, casks of figs and dried sardines, cod, anchovies and tuna salt, sugar and honey. There were no fresh vegetables, fruits were preserved, even raisins boiled in lye! An interesting item was preserved quince called *carne de membrillo* which is still made today out of guava, mango or pineapple and is for sale in Mexican groceries in the West Coast. Vinegar was used as a disinfectant in contaminated water but probably didn't help much.

Two crew members are familiar to Filipinos. One was a Venetian scholar named Antonio Pigafetta who had a thirst for "experience and glory." When he heard about the Armada de Molucca, he quit the diplomatic service and went in search of Magellan to offer his services. He achieved his objective, having gone down in history as the chronicler of the journey. Not what one finds in a ship's log but a more personal narrative.

The second is Enrique de Malacca, Magellan's slave, who was to accompany him. In his will, Magellan specified that Enrique be freed: "I declare and ordain as free and quit of every obligation of captivity, subjection, and slavery, my captured slave Enrique, mulatto, native of the city of Malacca, of the age of 26 years more or less, that from the day of my death thenceforward forever the said Enrique may be free and manumitted, and quit, exempt, and relieved of every obligation of slavery and subjection, and that he may act as he desires and thinks fit." That and 10,000 maravides.

The most dangerous part of the journey, which would eventually lead to mutiny, was the fact that the men had not really been told their final destination. (The other reason was of course that the captains of the other ships were Spanish and looked down on Magellan.) This was partly due to the practice of secrecy in voyages of this nature and the other was the fact that very few would have joined such a perilous journey had they known.

As early as their landing in Tenerife to get supplies, a message reached Magellan that one of the Spanish captains, Juan de Cartagena, who was related to Bishop Fonseca (one of those Machiavellian churchmen), intended to mutiny at the first chance. At the same time, the Portuguese king had sent two fleets of caravels to arrest him, which resulted in Magellan lifting anchor before the ships were properly restocked.

Although Magellan had obtained his former sovereign's permission to seek employment as an explorer elsewhere, King Manuel of Portugal was incensed and ordered the harassment of his relatives. His family estate in Sabrosa was vandalized, the family's escutcheon torn from the gate and covered with excrement. His relatives were stoned and had to flee the country in fear. Worse, his relatives were actually ashamed that he had abandoned their homeland and served Spain, the arch enemy of Portugal.

Priceless

YOUNG BLOOD

Jose Martin Azcarraga Loon

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

IT has been four months since I got back from a one-year study and work trip to Australia. My one-year stay has filled me with happy memories, and of course, very precious lessons that could not have been learned without that trip. Perhaps the most significant among them is the realization of how special my country is. But this brings to the fore one very important question: If this country is so special, why are so many of its people leaving in the first place?

At 17, I tend to ask myself if people are truly aware of their basic life paradigms. Looking at the larger picture would very much affect the way they think and arrange their priorities.

I have always looked at life as short and precious, something that should never be wasted doing the things you don't want to do. From this perspective, I ponder what really matters most: having a life of money and comfort or living a life of experience and challenge?

It is a tough question. I wish I could have it all. But only very few manage to have all that. The average Filipino is bound to lose one thing or another as an opportunity cost for something he considers more important.

Whether to leave the Philippines in exchange for the dollars he will earn is a typical dilemma faced by Filipinos. Some would choose to stay, earn less but enjoy life more, while others would choose to leave, earn more but miss out on a lot of things that are priceless.

Life abroad is not always as pleasurable as we imagine it to be. A foreign country is far too different from this country. The culture, the people and the life would make us conscious that we are in a different place. We are accustomed to having highly colorful political events, going out with friends, working at our own pace and relaxing at the end of the day with our loved ones by our side. The company of people important to us is something we treasure. Living away from them would not offer us that blessing.

Abroad, we would often go home, eat a self-cooked dinner and not even have time to watch TV because of the stress. We would often find ourselves in bed, grateful for having time to rest but worrying about the workday to come. People working in other countries live to work, while people in this country work to live. Anyone would say that living is a lot better than working.

Nothing much happens when you are abroad, except work, sleep, eat. Life is a routine, with every day feeling just like any other day. Nothing special happens, only the usual robotic process one goes through while working.

If you think that all that is worth the dollars you will earn, then go for it. I believe that we make more out of life here, than we'd do anywhere else.

I remember approaching my Social Science instructor in the school I went to while I was in Australia. I asked her for recommendations and references that I might need should I decide to work there in the future. Her reply was very simple: "You have a very special country. Why would you even think of leaving it? Your country needs you. Stay!"

I was surprised and embarrassed at the same time to hear a foreigner telling me about my country's worth. And I was enlightened.

We have a lot going for us in this country. We just have to endure the hardships that go with the good stuff. If we think those dollars will bring happiness and contentment, then we must ask ourselves what happiness means to us.

The company of our loved ones is a very special gift we have. Why waste the chance to be with them by working abroad? We only have one lifetime to live to the fullest. There's an old Filipino saying that goes: "*Di bale na patis at kanin ang uulamin, basta't magkasama ang lahat pag ito'y ihahain.*" (It doesn't matter if all we have is rice and *patis* so long as we get to eat together.)

This country offers us a lot, if we only know our blessings. A perfect weather, intriguing celebrities, easy and affordable access to things like cable TV, movies, haircut, massage, food, transport and the like. You cannot have these things abroad for the price we pay here.

Life's immensely priceless aspects can only be found here too: the company of loved ones, gimmicks with friends, the comfort of one's home and so many other things. I would rather have all that than all the dollars I could earn, because these are the things that matter most to me.

These were the things I missed and wished I had when I was away. Now that I'm back, I have learned to treasure them even more. Every Filipino-made TV ad, every Filipino TV show, every Filipino personality has assumed greater value in my eyes now. We will never really know what we are missing until we realize they exist.

I do not mean to discourage people who want to work abroad; those for whom the future holds no promise have no reason to drop this option. But those who can manage to live fairly well should stay. This country needs all the talent, the skill and the love it can get.

No amount of money can make me leave my country. Everything I have here is worth the low pay, the traffic and all the hardships I have to endure. For me there are things that money cannot buy.

We do have a special country and we can have it. The price to pay? Just stay.

Jose Martin Azcarraga Loon, 17, is an incoming freshman at the Ateneo de Manila University.

THEY SAID

God's hand

"*Tinulungan nila ako. Tinulungan sila lahat ni* God."

—Eight-year-old Kenneth Villa who was abandoned by parents, stricken with a rare congenital disorder but is now on his way to recovery, thanks to kindhearted doctors, medical workers and other donors

Government duty

"The government has a duty to act if something happens to any of its citizens."

—Japan International Volunteer Center President Michiya Kumaoka on the issue of three Japanese volunteers accused of rashly ignoring government warnings to stay away from Iraq after having been taken hostage there

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No Edsa IV plot for Bayan Muna

THIS seeks to clarify an INQUIRER news report in its April 23 issue which dragged us into the so-called "Edsa IV" and "No-El" plot.

Bayan Muna would like to point out that we are not planning, much less preparing, for these scenarios.

We also wish to give our side regarding the column of Juan L. Mercado which appeared in the Opinion page of your paper on April 27, titled: "Unsent People Power IV RSVPs." Mercado's comments on Bayan Muna's alleged role in the so-called Edsa IV were unfair as they were based on the wrong account that Bayan Muna led by me was on top of the preparation for the Edsa IV mobilization.

—NATHANAEL S. SANTIAGO,
secretary general, Bayan Muna,
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'Living Wage Commission'

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's Labor Day declaration that she agrees to a wage hike is propaganda masquerading as populism. If her support for a wage increase were not pure rhetoric then she should have granted a salary hike through a cost-of-living allowance, which is well within her powers. Instead she made a lame excuse of not wanting to be accused of electioneering, a thing which she has been doing by misusing public funds for her electoral campaign.

The regional wage boards should indeed be abolished but they should be replaced by a Living Wage Commission rather than by industry wage boards. The latter will be no different from regional wage boards where the tripartite representation only masks the anti-labor bias of its composition and decisions. Workers will only be shortchanged and given the runaround in any wage board setup. The only difference being that instead of workers in less industrialized regions being discriminated through lower pay, starvation wages in sunset industries will be legitimized.

The problem with wage setting is not so much in mechanism as in policy. The lynchpin of determining wages at present is cheap labor in order to attract investments. If the system of wage setting is to be reformed, the aim must be the operationalization of the constitutional provision mandating living wages for workers.

The wage policy of the state must be anchored on reducing the cost of living instead of cheapening the cost of labor. This is the formula to balance the need of labor for living wage and the requirements of capital for competitiveness.

It is possible to raise the minimum wage to the level of the living wage through a four-point formula of nominal wage increases—exemption from withholding taxes, subsidies in social security and price discounts in basic goods.

The task of the Living Wage Commission is to set the national standard of living for all workers irrespective of region and industry, and to implement the measures to raise the minimum wage to the living wage.

Complementary to this, industry wage setting must be realized through industry-wide bargaining not through bogus tripartite setups like industry wage boards. Incentives—similar to the directives for the organization of associations among tricycle and jeepney sectors—for the formation of industry-wide unions must be provided by the State. Aside from wages, standards in working conditions and benefits must be the subject of industry-wide bargaining between the unions of industrial workers and the industry associations of capitalists.

—REP. RENATO B MAGTUBO,
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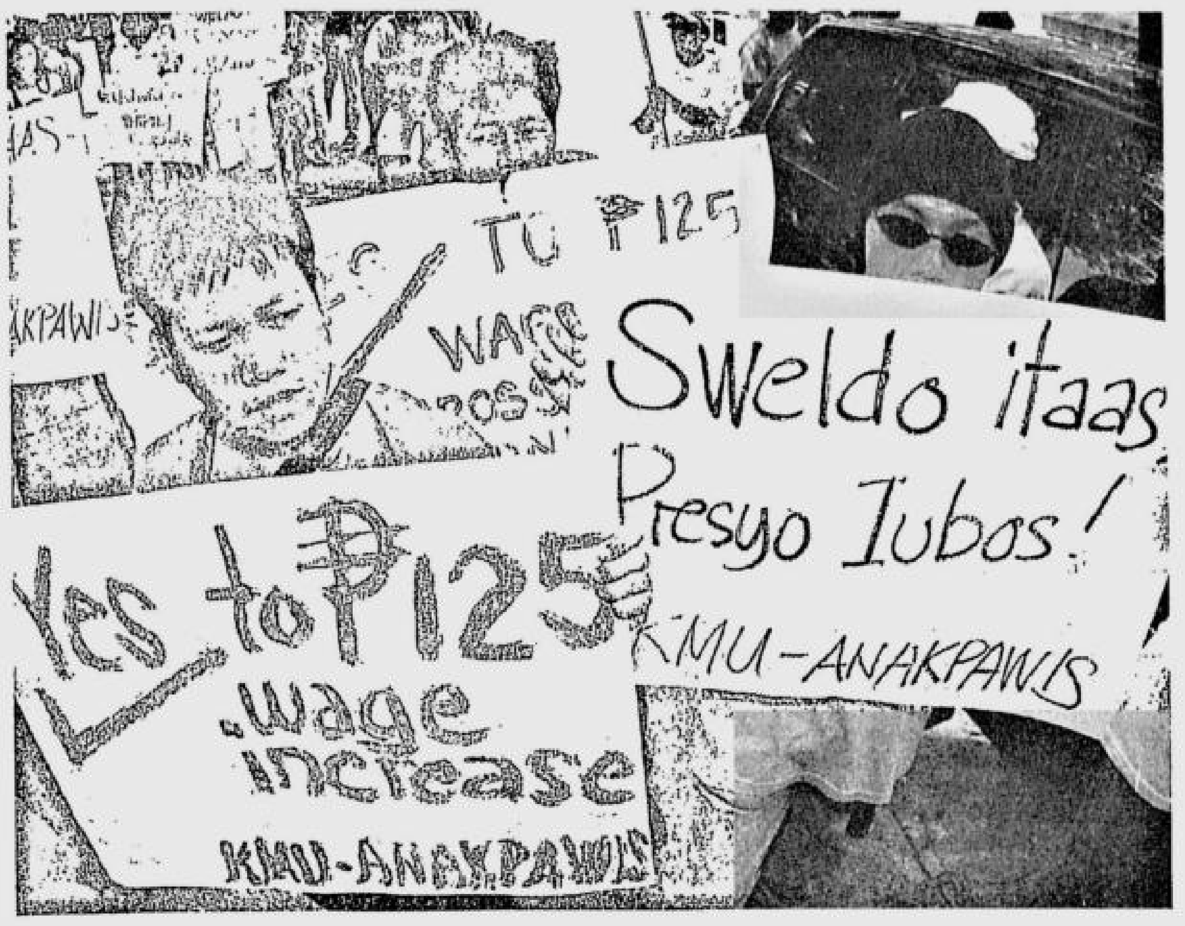

Wage increase

THE CLAMOR last Labor Day of some quarters for a minimum wage increase symbolizes the state of the trade union movement in our country.

The minimum wage, defined as the minimum necessary to keep a worker's body and soul together while at work, is society's duty to grant the workers. The function of organized labor is to demand a collective bargaining wage which, by definition, should be significantly bigger than the legal minimum. The failure to accommodate a collective bargaining demand calls for a strike; the failure of society to grant a long overdue minimum wage increase tears the body and the soul apart.

The marginalization of organized labor is rooted in the conditions imposed by the World Bank-International Monetary Fund upon our foreign debts, now estimated at $58 billion. The first step was decontrol and devaluation in 1962, which ruined the import substitution industries painstakingly built by Filipino industrialists in the 1950s. Then came the promotion of labor-intensive, export-oriented industries, which called for cheap and docile workers. Finally, in 1995, we accessed to the World Trade Organization which set in massive motion liberalization, deregulation, privatization and level playing field, thus completing the process of the country's de-industrialization which began in 1962.

Society can deny the clamor for a minimum wage adjustment only at its own peril because there is a limit to what the working masses can bear in terms of poverty and injustice. So, let society act or not act on the clamor.

The tragedy for the Filipino workers is that the May 10 presidential elections offer them no way out of poverty and injustice whatsoever. For lithe Filipino workers, the next six years, no matter who wins the presidency, will be more of the same because not one of the candidates proposes a meaningful departure from the unjust and oppressive status quo.

—AMADO GAT INCIONG,
Unit 301 Union Square
Condominium, 145 15th Avenue,
Cubao, Quezon City

Calea thanks media

OUR thanks to the media for the opportunity given the Confederated Associations of Licensed Entertainment Agencies (Calea) to voice its concerns.

Through your coverage, the Calea was able to air the plight of overseas performing artists (OPAs) and their struggle to achieve a respectable status even as they undergo rigorous training until they pass the skills tests and auditions required by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, the government agency tasked to regulate and assist our industry.

The Calea had long bemoaned the slow processing and release of the much-coveted artist record books (ARBs). To prove its accusation that the ARB, which is legally issued at P500, was being sold to talents who have not undergone the required Tesda-accredited training, Calea operatives went "underground" and bought ARBs from unscrupulous individuals, who identified themselves as employees of the Tesda OPA unit, for P50,000. After reporting this, Tesda and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) appear to be instituting the necessary reforms. Every time there is an unexplained delay in the processing of ARBs, there is the danger of losing whatever edge we have over other countries struggling to fill that special niche Filipino performers have carved for themselves.

The wolf called competition from other countries is at the door, and Calea is making sure it does not get in and swallow whatever advantage our talents have.

If they encounter problems in their workplaces, OPAs, with the protection of their legitimate licensed agencies, can request transfer or immediate repatriation, medical insurance, psychological counseling, educational assistance and livelihood orientation.

Experienced OPAs are also hired by their agencies as resource speakers and trainers, and they are invited to undergo continuous training in song and dance as well if they see the need for such.

Calea is bent on improving the image and the levels of professional training of the men and women engaged in the industry of entertainment export. This industry helps bring in over US$1 billion to the Philippine economy annually and we mean to protect not only the livelihood of our talents and ourselves but also our valuable contribution to help stabilize the country's economy.

Calea aims to keep satisfying the demand for Filipino performers abroad by protecting the talents that it sends and by continuing to develop them professionally.

—CHRISTIE GATCHALIAN-BUAN,
president; JING LANGOMEZ, chair;
BALBIR SINGH,
vice president, Confederated
Associations
of Licensed Entertainment Agencies

An affirmation of participatory governance

THIS is in reaction to a letter which appeared in the INQUIRER's May 3 issue, regarding Nueva Vizcaya experience in participatory governance.

May I please make it clear that the book "Celebrating Participatory Governance in Nueva Vizcaya" was authored by professors of the De La Salle University, who came to the province on their own volition.

We did not invite them to come and write about us. (We do not invite entities from other parts of the archipelago to come and observe how we run our government.) They just came because they heard of our successes in implementing the Local Government Code of 1991.

Being in the public affairs office of the provincial government, part of our job is to go on a regular basis to the upland communities of the province. Having been to almost every remote barangay in the province, I can say that the "poverty" the letter-senders are talking about refers to the lack of the amenities enjoyed by the middle-class people in the lowlands. As far as basic needs are concerned, the upland residents are not deprived. They eat three times a day, they have functioning health centers, they have good schools and teachers, they have irrigation to water their farms, and they have access to development information and technology. Many residents who used to sleep in nipa huts in all these generally crimeless *sitios* have been able to construct concrete houses because of their diligence and self-reliance. Only the very few who cannot move away from the dole system of traditional politicians cannot cope with the new trend of governance here. They blame the government (and the incumbent leader, for that matter) for their misery, without realizing that what causes their poverty is their own indolence.

The letter-senders should try to compare the province to any other province of the same class, and they will realize how far luckier we are than those whose leaders have not implemented participatory governance.

The organizations they are representing in their rejoinder have never been heard of even by the Philippine Information Agency, the mayors' offices, or any coordinating council. We believe that these are fictitious organizations used only to legitimize their reaction.

In fact, the letter-senders are beneficiaries of what they are writing against. If not for participatory governance, they could not have availed themselves of a scholarship program from the Nueve Vizcaya Press Club which has been given a voice in the provincial development council.

—GENARO B. BASILIO JR.,
community affairs officer,
Public Affairs and Information
Assistance Office,
Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya

Plea for a WWII veteran's widow

I AM writing in behalf of my mother, Generosa G. Cecilio, wife of World War II veteran Eduardo Fortich Cecilio who was with the Ussafe in Mindanao. My mother was widowed in 1970, but it was not until year 2000 that she got to finally register with the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office as she did not know that she had to file an application for her to enjoy her widow's benefits.

She is now receiving a monthly amount from the PVAO, but until now she has not received the promised lump-sum payment for the period covering 1970 to 2000.

My mother is now 92 years old. The monthly stipend she receives is not really enough for her medications and other necessities, especially those occasioned by her age. We have been told that the PVAO is cash-strapped, the reason for its inability to pay my mother the lumpsum due her.

With all the billions of pesos that the government spent for advertisements and other programs during the election campaign and all the money the government lost because of all the scams we read about every day, it is difficult to believe there is no money for the poor veterans' widows.

If the President is really concerned about the plight of the poor, then she should do something about this problem.

—RAFAEL G. CECILIO,
L20, Mt. Lanumbaan Street,
Capistrano Complex, Husa,
Cagayan de oro

Never a provincial budget officer

THIS is in reference to an article on the Villafuertes (PDI, 4/25/04), written by Leah Makabenta, citing Salvador "Badong" Senar as a former provincial budget officer . Although a certified public accountant by profession, Mr. Senar was never appointed provincial budget officer.

Salvador Senar was the former provincial treasurer of Camarines Sur and Sorsogon. He retired as regional director of the Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF), Region V, Legazpi City. I know because when I was the city treasurer of Iriga City, Director Salvador Senar exercised administrative supervision over all provincial and city treasurers in the Bicol Region.

—GODOFREDO O. PETEZA SR.,
J.P. Rizal St., Barangay Camambugan,
4600 Daet, Camarines Norte

Hope

COMMENTARY

Lourdes Didith v. Mendoza
Institute on Church and Social Issues

I CAME across several poems written by Nelly Sachs, a Nobel Prize winning poet who wrote much about the Holocaust. Nelly Sachs lost the man she loved during the Nazi period, and narrowly escaped certain death through the help of a friend who enabled her to immigrate from Germany to Switzerland. She was a poet of both witness and hope because after witnessing and experiencing the atrocities of the Holocaust, she came out in the open and bared all her sufferings and saw that through the misery, hope is not too far away.

Hope was so far out of sight for the people caught in the grip of the Nazi reign, but Sachs saw it. Her poems carried a faith in her heart. Despite the horrors her country experienced, she believed it would rise again. She was a quiet hero whose heart bled for her people; she went on fighting in her own way, through the power of her written words.

Today in our country, we may not be experiencing the same kind of terror and sorrow. The Holocaust was replete with sadness, horror and death. It was the height of tragedy. Here in the Philippines, we are in the height of comedy. What is happening in our local stage is ridiculously funny and outrageous. What is happening is horrifyingly laughable.

A few weeks ago political mudslinging reached an all time low. An accusation of rape hurled at a male politician, a presidential candidate stopping in mid-speech to rile a journalist at work, suspicions of business compromise, a comedian forced to keep mum because of his political leaning, shady deals—these were the stuff politics was made of the past few weeks. These were the stuff that made us laugh so hard we ended up crying. And through all this slapstick fun, we guffawed at the right moments, as each scene unfolded on our television sets. But after the show, most of us stopped laughing because the truth slowly sunk in. What we witnessed over and over again wasn't a show. It was the reality of our lives—we have become a laughingstock.

With an atmosphere of nervous despair pervading election day, people were wringing their hands in panic after clapping their hands numb in appreciation of the funny antics of our politicians. What now? Where do we go after the show? What do we do?

The problem with most of us is that we seem to forget that what we witness on the political stage is just a show. When the credits roll in, and the last round of clapping fades away, we need to go out and face the real world. We need to go out and work. We need to go out and face real people and do real jobs. We need to face reality.

The reality is we are a poor country that has been in the grip of elitist democracy for almost a century. The reality is that our population is growing, urbanization is changing our nation's landscape, our educational system is deteriorating. Filipinos are becoming poorer and many are leaving for distant lands. The reality is not funny. It's too hard to bear sometimes, but bear it we must, with hope.

By comparison, Nelly Sachs' reality during the Nazi years was far more cruel, far more difficult than the reality we must face today. But she faced it, and she encouraged her fellow Jews by bringing them hope through her poems. There is no reason for us to feel hopeless and cynical because what we experience today is not imminent, horrifying death like what Nelly Sachs witnessed. It is death, nonetheless, albeit slow. But we still have time to ward it, and we still have the strength to fight it.

How can the fighting begin then? First, we need to unglue ourselves from the privileged seats that give us a fantastic view of the antics of our politicians. We need to turn our eyes and ears away from them because they give us nothing good to see and hear anyway. We need to look away and look at where real work and real progress happen.

Where can we find real work and real progress that can change the harsh reality we experience today? Look around you, look at the faces of your fellow Filipinos who are working themselves to the bone to feed their families. Look at your community and see what projects are being implemented that benefit your immediate environment. Look at your local governments and see how they are working for you, if they are. Look at the local NGOs and civil society groups near you and see what they are trying to do to improve our nation's lot. Look at your church and see how it strives to sustain your faith even if it is itself under attack sometimes. That's where hope is.

There are a number of concrete projects under our noses that escape our vision simply because we are busy being amused by our national politicians. What we should do now is simply laugh at these politicians and turn away from them. We should look at the real people around us who continue to hope in our country, despite the blunders our politicians are making. They continue to show hope by initiating concrete projects around them. Let's encourage and join these people of hope. Then maybe, this can give us the opportunity to really alter our sordid society, little by little. We must not wait passively for the tragedy, in our case, tragi-comedy to end. We must do something so it will end.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
A15

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Elections normal: Chaos everywhere

Polls postponed, cheap shots launched in North

By the PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and PDI Central Luzon Desk

BANGUED, Abra—The Commission on Elections postponed the elections in at least seven villages in the remote town of Tineg after the distribution of election materials was delayed due to bad weather and conflict between rival mayoral candidates there.

Armando Velasco, Comelec Cordillera director, said heavy rains prevented Army soldiers and Comelec personnel from airlifting election materials to the town in time for Monday's elections.

Tineg is about 200 km from the capital town of Bangued and can be reached after seven hours of land travel on rough and mountainous terrain. The town has 2,487 registered voters in 16 precincts.

The mayoral post is being contested by reelectionist Mayor Edwin Crisologo and Tony Benwaren.

Velasco said they would hold special elections in at least seven villages in Tineg today. The election in some villages in the town, especially those near the town center, pushed through on Monday.

JDV's name missing

In Pangasinan, election day started with a festive atmosphere after the office of Speaker Jose de Venecia released 100 balloons at the Dagupan City plaza.

The balloons were marked with "Mabuhay President Macapagal-Arroyo" and "Mabuhay Vice President Noli de Castro."

But the name of De Venecia, who is running unopposed for representative of Pangasinan's fourth district, was missing in the printed lists of official candidates that were placed inside the polling precincts.

Upon learning of the slight, Comelec staff members hastily wrote De Venecia's name in the list.

But De Venecia just smiled when he learned about the blunder. "Maybe, because I'm unopposed, they forgot it," he said.

The Speaker voted at Precinct 67-A at the Bonuan Binloc Elementary School. His wife Gina voted in San Fabian town.

De Venecia assured that the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats party would not resort to cheating to ensure the victory of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Candidates in the province also started distributing rice, noodles and sardines to voters in many towns from Saturday to Monday.

"This is much better than during calamities when relief goods are hard to come by," a resident said.

Envelopes containing from P20 to P200 each were also distributed, according to a candidate who asked not to be named.

In Binmaley town, the going rate for voters was P500 to P700 each voter, a resident said.

Political leaders in the barangays also offered free meals to voters who went to their houses.

Mt. Province, Benguet

In Mt. Province, hundreds of voters were ferried by six-wheel trucks and government vehicles to Natonin town on Monday morning after striking jeepney drivers and operators refused to ply their routes.

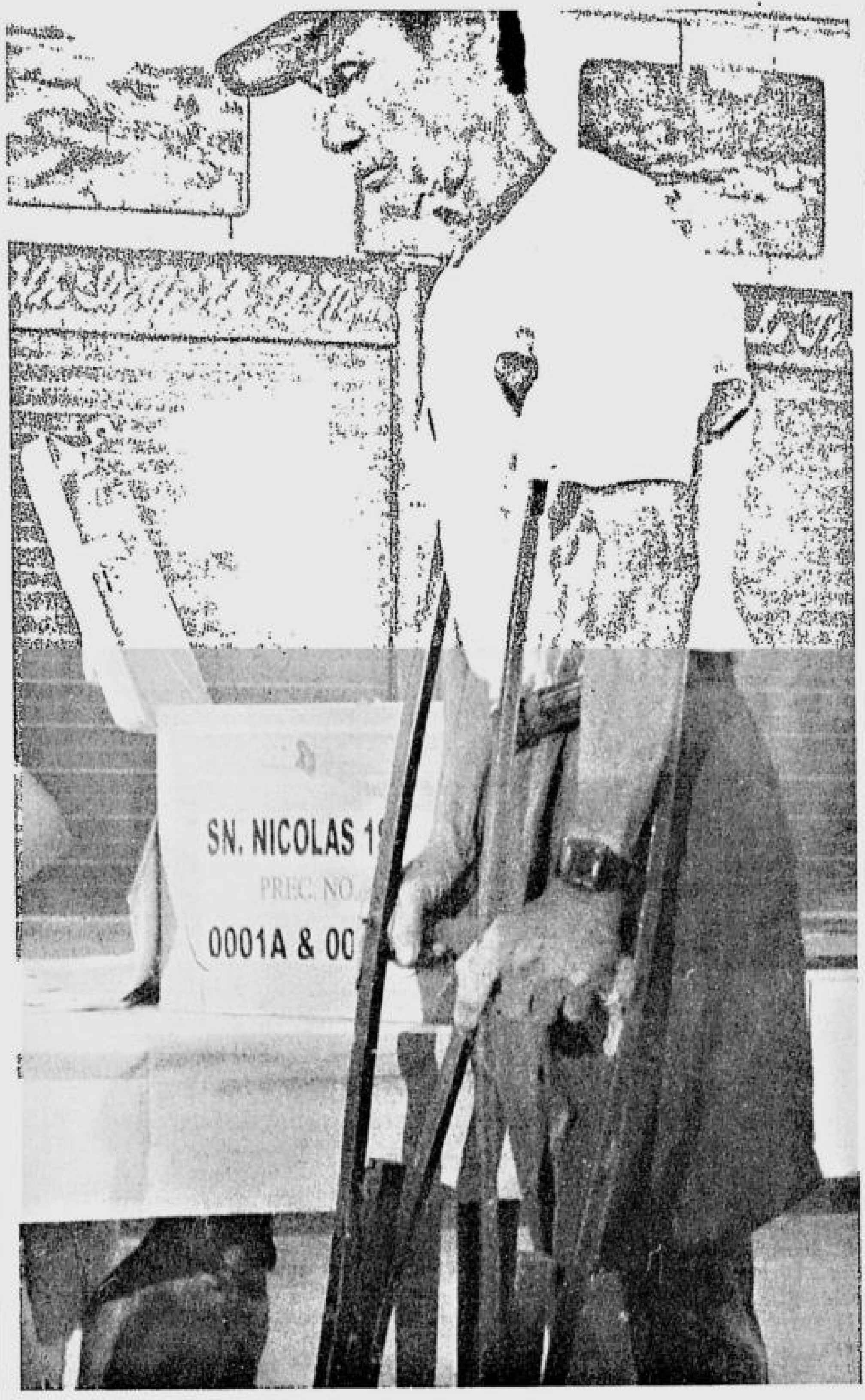
The Natonin residents had been stranded in the capital town of Bontoc since Sunday because of the strike called by the operators and drivers demanding for a reduction of oil prices and the improvement of the Paracelis-Natonin Road.

Also in Bontoc, Comelec officials stopped politicians from using private vehicles to ferry voters to polling precincts.

Comelec officials had received reports from local officials and poll watchers that the politicians' private vehicles been used in ballot switching and snatching.

Election officer Rex Gatud of La

POLLS/ A16



FAITH VAL HANDUMON
An unidentified voter stands with the aid of his crutches in a precinct in Lubao, Pampanga to take part in an exercise that could spell the difference between progress and stagnation for millions of his countrymen.

Ballot snatching, tension in South

TUBURAN, Basilan—A supporter of reelectionist Mayor Dore Kalahal snatched a ballot box and several sheets of official ballots at the Lower Sinangkapan Elementary School here at 9:30 a.m. Monday.

The suspect, Hadja Fatma Sali, said she merely saved the election materials against armed men who were arriving at that time. The armed men are allegedly followers of mayoralty candidate Hadjirun Jamirin.

"I did not snatch or steal. I just protected the ballot box and the ballots," Sali told the military and members of the Board of Election Inspectors.

The materials have been declared void.

In Esperanza, Sultan Kudarat, six men were arrested for trying to snatch a ballot box.

Sultan Kudarat

In Tacurong City in Sultan Kudarat, another suspect disrupted the start of the balloting when he tried but failed to snatch a ballot box.

In Barira, Maguindanao, Sheik Ali Tago, a mayoral candidate, claimed over the radio that filling out of ballots was done at the town hall on Saturday evening.

Tago said there is no election happening in Barira.

But reelectionist Mayor Alex Tumawis denied Tago's allegation and said election was going on smoothly.

Winnie Asdala, election supervisor in Maguindanao, also said there was voting in Barira.

Maguindanao provincial administrator Norie Unas said election in the province was generally peaceful as of press time.

In Cateel, Davao Oriental, Mandaya Lumad were treated to food ration courtesy of village officials identified with some politicians.

Aside from the food ration, a village official told Mandaya natives on Sunday night that they would also receive P100 in cash.

In Mati town, voters complained that the rice allegedly supplied by the camp of reelectionist Gov. Maria Elena Palma Gil is "rotten."

"It's disgusting. We could not eat that rice, it's

BALLOT/ A16

Last minute withdrawals, free food in Visayas

ILOILO CITY—Two candidates have withdrawn their bids in Cebu and Iloilo. One was in preparation for a Cabinet position. The other was to save family unity.

Iloilo Rep. Augusto Syjuco of Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas-CMD) pulled out of the race at about 9:20 p.m. on Sunday in anticipation of his possible appointment in the Cabinet by President Macapagal-Arroyo, whom he described as a frontrunner in the presidential contest.

Syjuco, who is running unopposed, is replaced by his wife Judy as congressional candidate in Iloilo's second district.

But for Councilor Jose Mari Osmeña of Medellin town, Cebu, his reason for withdrawing from Cebu's gubernatorial race was personal.

He acceded to the request of his sister Georgia to give way to their nephew, Vice Gov. John Gregory "John-john" Osmeña, who is also running for governor under the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC), for the sake of the family unity. Jose Mari ran under the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL).

Syjuco said he got a call from President Macapagal about a week ago about his possible appointment to the Cabinet in the event she wins in the presidential race.

If the appointment pushes through, Syjuco said he would have to resign from his position in Congress, depriving his district of at least P150 million in pork barrel funds every year.

Syjuco said he could not also say no to the President. "My district will be more privileged. They do not only have a Cabinet man but also a Congress person who can continue my programs and whose honesty and integrity I trust."

Syjuco did not say what position was offered to him by the President. He said he was offered the post, being one of the three "most active" legislator in the presidential campaign. The two others were Speaker Jose De Venecia and Rep. Prospero Pichay.

BALLOT SECRECY FOLDER

CEBU Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal makes sure he reads right as he casts his vote in Cebu City. ALNOE PANER/CEBU DAILY NEWS

Syjuco claimed he was also instrumental in conceptualizing with the President the PhilHealth and the education-for-all programs of the Macapagal administration.

In Cebu, hours before the end of the campaign period, Jose Mari sent a sworn statement to the Commission on Election provincial office that formalized his withdrawal from the Capitol race.

Jose Mari's official reason was that he could not sustain a province-wide campaign and election expenses.

According to John-john, no money was involved in his uncle's decision to quit. "It was my Tita Georgia (who) prevailed upon her brother (Jose Mari," said John-john, the only child of reelectionist Sen. "Sonny". John Osmeña.

Former Cebu Gov. Vicente de la Serna, adviser of the vice governor and an ally of Senator Osmeña, said that had Jose Mari stayed on in the race, "this could have meant lost votes for John-john."

"The Osmeñas realized that if John-john loses, it will not only be a loss to Sonny but a loss to all the Osmeñas," said Dela Serna.

Jose Mari earlier said he decided to join the gubernatorial race to teach his nephew a lesson, whom he had de-

LAST MINUTE/ A16

Trouble spots in S. Luzon disturb peace

By the PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

ELECTIONS in Southern Luzon were relatively peaceful but some areas experienced trouble as failure of elections were declared in some precincts because of ballot snatching and other reasons.

There were also reports of rampant vote-buying, with some candidates distributing fake bills, delisting from the voters' lists and continuous dissemination of campaign paraphernalia like sample ballots in some villages even as the voting had started.

Rev. Fr. Jovic Lobrigo, spokesperson of the Social Action Center of Legazpi, said no election-related violence was reported in Albay.

This was confirmed by the Caridad Zazon, chair of the Commission on Elections in Daraga, despite parts of it having been declared areas of immediate concern following several politically related killings prior to the elections.

But several areas faced trouble as elections were declared failures following ballot box snatching, massive voters disenfranchisement and late arrival of election paraphernalia.

In Barangay Busac, Ligao City, around 470 voters were not able to vote in the Busac Elementary School, after a failure of elections was declared in the school in the morning.

Lawyer Noriel Badiola, Comelec officer, said alleged government soldiers led by a certain Sgt. Sonny Malimlim snatched three ballot boxes before the start of voting at 7 a.m.

He said Malimlim declared that the elections should be stopped and then allegedly sent home the board of election inspectors at precincts 80A, 81A and 82A.

Col. Ramon Santos, 901st Infantry Brigade commanding officer, however, denied that ballot snatching happened and that the Army was involved in it.

Reports relayed by Col. Edmundo Malabanjot, commanding officer of the 65th Infantry Battalion based in Barangay Tula-tula, said armed men in uniform were involved in the snatching but it was unsure if these were

TROUBLE/ A16

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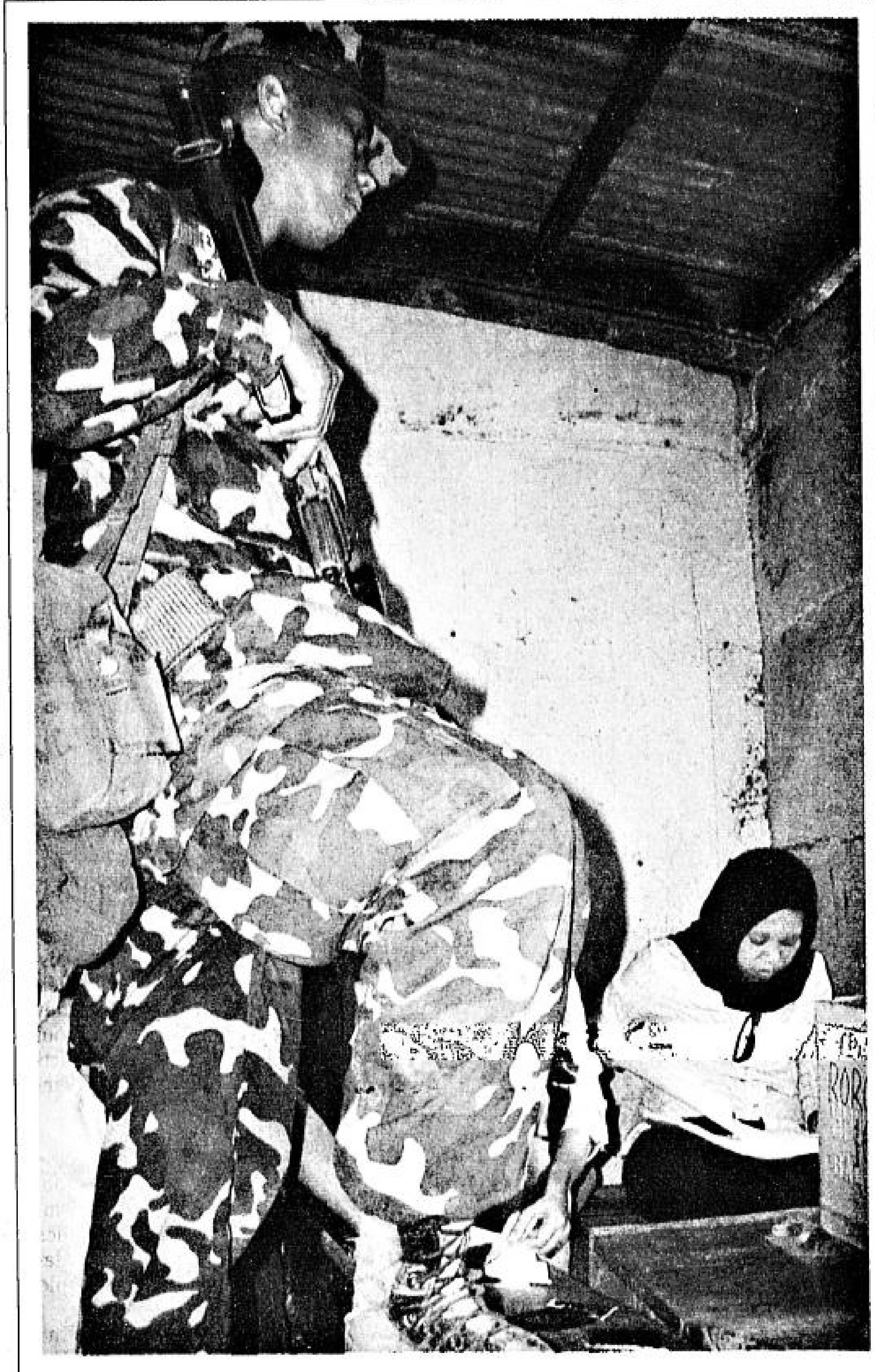


PROTECTION

AL FRITZ G ERMA/CONTRIBUTOR

Voters in Bacolod Kalawi, Lanao del Sur get one of the best protection ever in these times of chaos and uncertainty: a Marine soldier making sure no one interferes with their choices.

Ballot snatching, tension . . .

From page A15

rotten already. We have yet to get the P500 promised by Gov. Palma Gil to us," 59-year-old Simeon Maritas said.

Free rides

Voters in Mati were also given free rides, courtesy of reelectionist Rep. Joel Mayo Almario.

"We are instructed to give free rides only to supporters of (Rep.) Almario," tricycle driver Marianito Sumpil said. For Mandaya natives, the free rides gave them opportunity not only to vote but also to do some marketing.

"Normally, transportation from our village to the poblacion of Mati would cost us P100 each. But now, we are taking advantage of the situation, we are also buying rice, fuel and medicines in the downtown so we saved a lot because it's free ride today courtesy of politicians who treat us as very special at least on this day only," Manding Gumiran, a resident of a hinterland village in the said town said.

In Tagum City in Davao del Norte, policemen were investigating an alleged supporter of mayoralty candidate Rey Uy who was caught in the act of vote-buying in Barangay Busaon on Sunday morning.

Efren Verallo, 50, farmer, was allegedly distributing Uy's handbills stapled to P100 bills when he was caught by Busaon barangay kagawad Wilfredo Sotelo.

Sotelo then handed over the suspect and a total of P2,100 cash to the police for investigation.

Weapons seized

In Nabunturan, Compostela Valley, two persons, one of them yielded a bladed weapon, were arrested by police after they misrepresented themselves as Comelec volunteers.

The suspects, Rodrigo Morales and Oligario Alabar, were now being investigated.

Alydia Pahotahog, Nabunturan election officer, inspected the identification cards presented to police by the two suspects.

But she said the IDs were forged. The two suspects were booked at the Nabunturan police jail while charges were being prepared against them.

Still in Nabunturan, an alleged supporter of Vice Gov. Ruwel Gonzaga was arrested in Barangay Sta. Maria around 10 a.m. Monday.

Jimmy Apasa yielded a super .38 caliber pistol after policemen collared him during a manhunt.

The manhunt was launched after the camp of reelectionist Rep. Prospero Amatong complained that Apasa and another companion were bribing voters.

In Misamis Occidental, a total of seven persons were arrested after they were caught in the act of vote-buying.

Latest to fall were four vote-buying agents in Oroquieta City, who were arrested by policemen in Barangay Pines on Monday morning.

Cash .

The suspects were carrying a still unaccounted amount of cash in 500 and 100-peso denominations.

The bills they carried were stapled with either handbills or sample ballots of lawyer Jorge Almonte, a mayoralty candidate in Oroquieta.

On Sunday, Bonifacio Macas was caught while in the act of vote-buying in Ozamiz City.

Two days before, 50-pesos bills stapled with the handbill of Ozamiz mayoralty candidate Benjamin Fuentes were seized from the possession of Norben Bation and Annie Abellanosa. *Julie S. Alipala, Aquiles Z. Zonio, Edwin O. Fernandez, Ferdinand O. Zuasola, Anthony S. Allada, Dennis Jay C. Santos and Ryan D. Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Polls postponed, cheap shots launched . . .

From page A15

Trinidad, Benguet, said his office was swamped with complaints of missing names in the certified voters' lists.

Pampanga

Poll watchers of Pampanga gubernatorial candidate Juan Pablo Bondoc in Lubao town were reportedly paid P1,000 each, lower by P250 given by Mayor Dennis Pineda to help secure the votes for the administration's candidates.

The private election watchdogs National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) and the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) chapters in Pampanga reported receiving several complaints from voters whose names did not appear in computerized voters lists.

In Apalit, for example, two precincts with about 500 voters were "missing" in Barangay San Vicente.

Reports of vote-buying swamped the Namfrel's provincial operation base at the Metropolitan Cathedral in the City of San Fernando.

At 11:10 a.m., at least 25 supposedly fresh ballots in Barangay Maimpis in the City of San Fernando already bore the name of mayoral bet Andrea Domingo. The poll watchers of her rivals filed separate protests before the board of election inspectors (BEI).

In San Simon, two campaign managers of mayoral bet Russel Figueroa were beaten up by supporters of reelectionist Mayor Rodrigo Canlas on Sunday night. Tension broke out as the rival camps traded accusations of vote-buying.

Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino

Catholic Bishop Ramon Villena was immediately issued two security aides following death threats received by his office on Monday morning.

The bishop, however, was unfazed. After he had cast his vote, he proceeded to visit towns in the province where tension among rival political camps was reported to be high.

Provincial administrator Virgilio Tiongson dispelled reports, circulated through text messages, that he, Gov. Rodolfo Agbayani and mayoral candidate Eduardo Tiongson, were killed in an ambush.

Tension rose early in Solano town on Monday morning when lawyer Lambert Galima, mayoral candidate, accused a rival candidate of illegal campaigning.

Zambales

Confusion was observed in many voting precincts in Zambales following reports of missing names.

Lydia Florentino-Pangilinan, Comelec provincial officer, said the election at Barangay Piliin San Marcelino town did not start on time due to the delayed delivery of election materials.

In Olongapo City, opposition candidates complained of lack of jeepneys in at least two barangays here on Monday, which prevented their supporters from casting their votes.

Dizon said voters, especially those in the remote barangays of Gordon Heights and New Cabalan, had to walk to the polling precincts.

In Subic town, Chief Insp. Jerry Sumbad, town police chief, said 62 personnel from the Navy and eight from the Army secured the town hall to prevent any untoward incident.

In Candelaria town, Insp. Shirley Hebron, town police chief, said aside from frequent brownouts on Sunday night and Monday morning, there had been no reported election related problem.

Bulacan, Bataan

In Bulacan, police arrested some supporters of a vice mayoral candidate and a councilor in Malolos for charges of vote-buying and illegal campaigning.

In Bataan, Comelec officials reported the lack of tally sheets and other election paraphernalia in Dinalupihan town.

Mariveles town, which has the largest number of registered voters in Bataan at more than 57,000, was placed under Comelec control following the killing of supporters of local politicians there last week.

The Bayan Muna party-list group said 100 ballots were discovered missing from a village in Baguio City on Monday, where 194 voters are registered.

Beverly Longid, a Bayan Muna nominee, said Barangay Pinget's board of election inspectors certified receiving all 194 ballots on Sunday, but only 94 turned up when validated by poll watchers.

The Comelec provided 100 ballots to replace the missing materials, but Longid said the solution could end up disenfranchising 100 other voters from other precincts.

Ilocos Norte

In Ilocos Norte, voters whose names were missing left polling centers without casting their votes while other voters spent hours looking for their names in other precincts.

Voters who trooped to the centers at 7 a.m. left the polling centers fuming after discovering that their names were not listed in precincts they had been voting in the past election years.

Lawyer Alipio Castillo Jr., Ilocos Norte election supervisor, said voters should have checked their names in the Comelec's master list or asked election inspectors to verify their records.

Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and his siblings Rep. Imee Marcos and Irene Marcos-Araneta were among the early birds who cast their votes at the Mariano Marcos Memorial Elementary School in their hometown Batac at 8 a.m.

Isabela, Nueva Ecija

In Isabela, Senior Supt. Nelson Nario, Isabela police director, said several men burned a pick-up truck owned by a supporter of Ramon mayoral candidate Wilfredo Tabag on Sunday.

In Nueva Ecija, Gov. Tomas Joson III ordered his legal staff to gather evidence for the reported massive vote-buying in Nueva Ecija.

In a radio interview, he said he received his reports that his political opponents were giving out P2,000 to voters and as high as P5,000 to families. *Reports from Artha Kira Paredes, Desiree Caluza, Vincent Cabreza, Ben Moses Ebreo, Donna Demetillo, Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Melvin Gascon, Maurice Malanes, Delmar Carino, Cristina Arzadon and Nathan Alcantara, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Tonette Orejas, Cesar Villa, Allan Macatuno, Ansbert Joaquin, Greg Refraccion, Carmela Reyes and Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Last minute withdrawals . . .

From page A15

scribed as "arrogant."

In Roxas City, food or anything that could be taken in was given for free to voters here just to entice them to go for certain candidates in yesterday's elections.

For over a week until Saturday, a vehicle carrying a huge banner of Vice Mayor Roberto Ignacio, who is seeking reelection under the Liberal Party banner, was seen distributing ice *buko* (coconut ice drop) to city residents here.

This was on top of the Tanduay Dark that the Ignacio camp had been dangling to the city electorate since the start of the campaign period.

The beneficiaries were only too willing to partake of such "manna from heaven"—as one radio reporter described it in jest.

During the LP's political caucus in Barangay 2 here, the house of Ignacio's political supporter was seen teeming with people feasting on food and beers. But all these were just a prelude to the real thing: crisp peso bills attached to a sample ballot.

Several voters in the city told the INQUIRER they received P150 each from their respective barangay leaders.

Attached to the peso bills were sample ballots of the administration candidates both from the national and local levels.

They said the money came from the LP camp whose leadership in Capiz is being steered by the Roxases—Senate aspirant Mar Roxas II and his mother, Judy Araneta-Roxas. The LP was founded by the late opposition Sen. Gerardo Roxas Sr., father of Mar and husband of Judy.

The practice of vote-buying has become a common fare in Capiz elections, which started during the 1986 snap elections.

Talks of money being stocked in the cabinet of the Escolin family here still linger in the minds of every Capiceno voter.

The Escolins of Capiz are close relatives of first lady Imelda Romualdez-Marcos.

Now, the Escolins, as "political kingmaker" mainly on account of money, have been "replaced" by the Roxases, if not the Aranetas.

When the late Capiz Rep. Gerardo "Dinggoy" Roxas, Jr. ran for congressman for the first district of Capiz in the 1988 elections, he clobbered by a wide margin the more experienced and highly respected Enrique "Ike" Belo.

It is still vivid in the minds of Capicenos about how the money was supposedly brought in here.

Talks then were campaign funds to the tune of millions of pesos were being brought in a day before the election day from the Araneta Center by several attache cases and carried by helicopter to Roxas. *Raj Padilla, Kathy Navarro, Gerry Pagharion, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Trouble spots in S. Luzon disturb peace

From page A15

Army soldiers, Badiola said.

Ligao City has been declared under Comelec control at 10 a.m.

Badiola, however, said the snatching of the three ballot boxes will not affect the final results of elections in the city.

In Paete, Laguna, hundreds of people and followers of incumbent Mayor Elmoise Afurong staged a protest rally at the town plaza to protest what he called a delaying tactic by the Comelec when some 3,000 ballots arrived very late in the morning.

The mayor, speaking through a megaphone before the crowd, cited an Omnibus Election Code rule saying that the voting should have started at 7 a.m. The ballots came only at about 10:15 a.m., he said.

Lawyer Dioscoro Pajutan, Comelec provincial supervisor, however, assured the protesters that the election would nevertheless proceed today.

He explained that the delay was due to the late transmission of ballots to many towns.

This was confirmed by provincial treasurer Manuel Leycano Jr.

Officials of the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) here said Comelec national officials arrived to settle the conflict.

After consulting the Comelec in Manila, the Comelec provincial head decided to move the election for today, to also start at 7 a.m. and end at 3 p.m.

In Calamba City, Rep. Joaquin Chipeco, who was running for the mayoral seat, was reported to have filed with the Comelec a failure of elections in the city as around 60,000 voters were reportedly disenfranchished.

Election paraphernalia for Kalayaan, Laguna was delivered only yesterday due to bad weather.

Voters from Sta. Maria, Mabitac, Siniloan, and Sta. Cruz towns in Laguna did not mind the heavy downpour as thousands of them flocked to their respective voting precincts earlier than 7 a.m.

But a voting precinct in Pangil, Laguna became the subject of protests when the precinct election chair allowed voting to start at 6:30 a.m. while some poll watchers were still out.

In Masbate and Batangas, thousands of voters did not find their names in the voters' list while those of dead persons were still on the record.

In Barangay Sta. Teresita in Dumaran town, Palawan, 67 voters claimed that their names were deactivated from the voters' list although they voted in the 2001 elections.

Vote-buying

Massive vote-buying was reported in Tabaco City and neighboring municipalities of Albay's first district.

During the candidates' so-called special operations, cash given to voters ranged from P20 to P50 from a councilor, P50-P100 from vice mayoral candidates and P100-300 from mayoral candidates.

In Irosin, Sorsogon, ward leaders distributed P250 from incumbent mayor Lilia Gonzalez and P100 from her rival Neil Futalan, the INQUIRER learned from some voters. The two vice mayoral candidates paid P50 and P20 each, while those who are running for councilor paid P20, the voters said.

Also, in Prieto Diaz, payment was P150 from the mayoral candidate, P50 from vice mayor and P250 from councilors. Gubat has the highest rate, with P1,000, P800 and P400 from the three mayoral candidates, according to voters who reported to the INQUIRER.

In Sorsogon City, sources said vote-buying started since Friday with voters being made to sign a paper to prove that they received the money.

One camp allegedly paid P400 while the rival camp allegedly paid P200 per vote.

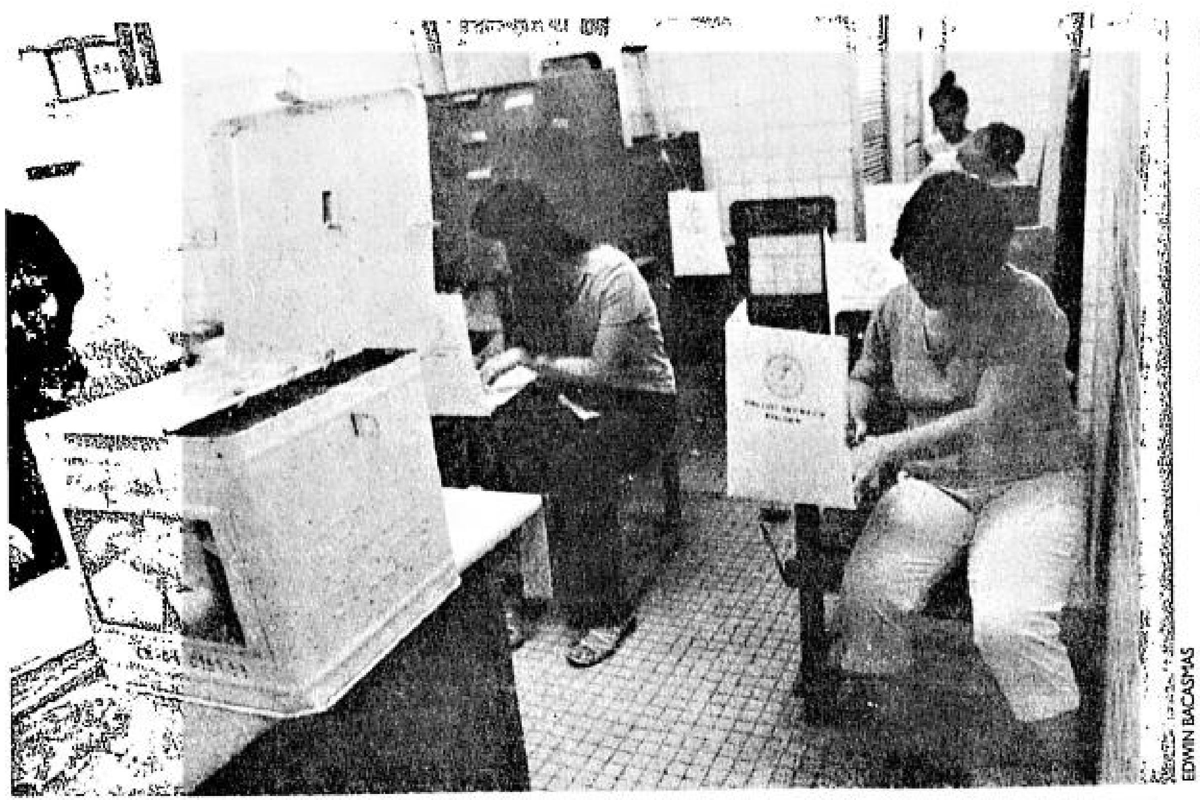
Jose Zamora, provincial election officer, said candidates may file their complaint on vote-buying at the provincial prosecutor's office because their office could not attend to the complaints.

In Puerto Princesa, letters addressed to officials of Barangay Sta. Monica of this city were sent to the wrong hands and the wrong barangays early yesterday morning.

The letters, some with live bullets of 9-mm pistol, warned barangay officials to stop supporting Mayor Edward Hagedorn. *Reports from Gil Francis G. Arevalo, Michael B. Jaucian, Nino Jesus Orbeta, Job Belen, Emir E. Gamis, Mei Magsino, Marlon Ramos, Clarice Colting, Romulo O. Ponte and Geraldford Ticke, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

SENATORIAL candidate Robert Jaworski escapes to Silang, Cavite to spend a hassle-free day after casting his vote with his grandsons.

JUN CATALLA CONTRIBUTOR



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FORBES Park folk hold orderly election with a touch of class in the airconditioned parish center of the Santuario de San Antonio. Barangay chair Jose Concepcion (in jacket) provided teachers with good food, shuttle service.

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From page A1

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It was not another reality TV show; it was democracy at work.

Santuario de San Antonio

In Barangay Forbes Park, where Makati's old rich reside, the precincts were set up on the second floor of the Santuario de San Antonio Parish Center. The hall had chandeliers, parquet floors, and it was air-conditioned.

Traditionally, the citizens of Forbes vote at the village pavilion. This is why Lina Able, a college professor from the government-run University of Makati, had requested the barangay for electric fans.

To her comfort and surprise, for this election, the polling precincts were moved to the air-conditioned Santuario which was "something better." Able feels "blessed" that she's been consistently assigned at Forbes for poll duties since 1986.

Able and other polling officials were also provided with six packed meals for the day, courtesy of the barangay council chaired by Jose "JoeCon" Concepcion, who also heads the National Movement for Free Elections.

In Barangay Payatas, where the city's poor eke out a living scavenging through garbage, one school had to clean up and use four of its toilets as polling centers because it did not have enough classrooms to accommodate the 20,605 voters covered by the 103 precincts.

Toilets

Voters who trooped to the Payatas A Elementary School in Quezon City had to endure filling up their ballots inside toilets, the library, clinic, guidance center or along the hallways, which were all converted into polling precincts to accommodate all the voters.

"We had no choice. We could not put up tents outside like other schools because there is no space. We have to make do with what we have," school principal Marivic Panganiban explained.

Even with the assignment of five precincts in one classroom, the toilets and other rooms had to function as polling centers and storage room for election paraphernalia.

"This happens every election. Doesn't the government see this? They spend so much on non-priority projects when they should be doing something about this. We really pity the voters," Panganiban told the INQUIRER amid the complaints and confusion outside her office.

Disciplined voters

As usual, many of the Forbes Park residents arrived in luxury vehicles.

Business magnate Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala came at 7 a.m. and was among the first to show at Precinct No. 232A. Jaza was either on his way or had just played polo because he was still in riding gear and boots, said poll clerk Azenith Ventanilla.

Singer-composer Jose Mari Chan cast his ballot at 11 a.m. and was satisfied with the procedure, except for the "bottleneck" at his precinct. He thought that getting the ballot and returning it to the same person slowed up the process.

Voting by dictation

A few came with their househelp, drivers or caregivers.

Former Professional Basketball Association Commissioner Leo Prieto, who was recovering from a stroke, dictated his election choices to nurse Espie Cantor, who filled up the ballot on his behalf.

Magdalena Catangay, 75, compared her prepared list of candidates to that of her 91-year-old employer, Luz Kahn, whom she has loyally served for the last 40 years.

Poll watchers and officers said the voters at Forbes were "cooperative and disciplined." Although a few, initially, couldn't find their names on the Comelec list, no one got angry or threw his weight around.

Dr. Ludivina Pagkaliwagan, the supervising officer, said Forbes had 18 precincts with 200 voters each. As of noon yesterday, the only problem she encountered was the "physical arrangement" of the tables, and one voter whose name was not on the list.

Annoyed voters

At noon yesterday, half of the voters who turned up at the Payatas A Elementary School, had not cast their ballots. Their names were neither in the voters' list nor in the book of voters, Panganiban said.

Voters who could not find their names were usually instructed to check their registration at City Hall and bring their complaints to the election officer. The circuitous procedure annoyed many.

"They are turned off because they have their voters registration record, they have been validated, and still they could not vote. You do not expect these people to spend money for transportation just to verify their precincts at City Hall. Even if they do, by the time they find out which place to vote, the precincts would have been closed," Panganiban said.

Blind vote

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Complaints from voters, teachers swamp Comelec

From page A1

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In Mandaluyong City, the name of the former chief of the Comelec information division—Sonia Dipasupil Barros—was still on the voters' list although she had been dead for six years.

But her sister, INQUIRER desk editor Ester Dipasupil, could not find her own name on the list.

Jose Cuisia, former governor of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, was unable to vote because his name was not on the voters' list in his precinct at the La Salle Zobel school in Ayala-Alabang, Muntinlupa.

Cuisia said a Comelec officer told him that he must have been delisted for not voting in the past two elections. But he said he voted in the 1998 presidential elections, although he was not sure about the last senatorial elections in 2001.

Stifling heat

Filipinos braved stifling heat, sudden rain and long queues, but frustration was in store for many who found they did not officially "exist" as voters.

Independent poll monitors earlier warned that many could be disenfranchised by the failure of the Commission on Elections to issue updated lists in time for elections in many parts of the country.

"I'm so irritated," said Manila voter Elena Isleta, 40. "I was looking for my name in that voting center for about 45 minutes, so I just left because no one was paying attention to me."

Exasperated

INQUIRER columnist and Metro Magazine editor Thelma San Juan was among the exasperated ones.

San Juan said she had voted "all these years" at Precinct No. 535-A at the BF Homes Parañaque gym. "All my family members were on the list, but not me. To think I had gone for revalidation months ago."

She sought the help of volunteers of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting and a representative of the Commission on Elections and was given a number to call. "But it was not working," San Juan said. Finally, she checked the Comelec website and got a final answer: she wasn't registered.

Two sons of INQUIRER Opinion editor Jorge Aruta, enthusiastic first-time voters at ages 20 and 18, failed to exercise their right as well.

The two arrived at the precinct at 7:30 a.m. but couldn't find their names in the certified voters list. They obtained a certification from the Comelec office in Quezon City hall, but were still not allowed to vote.

Failure of elections

The Comelec itself declared a failure of elections on the islands of Fuga, Camiguin and Babuyan, and in the town of Tineg in Abra, all in northern Luzon, to which it was unable to deliver election paraphernalia purportedly because of bad weather and transport problems.

"Special elections" will be held today in certain barangays in those areas, according to Commissioners Mehol Sadain and Florentino Tuason.

Sadain said the islands had about 3,400 voters and Tineg about 800—figures that Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos immediately dismissed as inconsequential for those seeking national posts.

Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, chief of the Armed Forces' Public Information Office, said a failure of elections had also been declared in five towns of Lanao del Sur for the following reasons:

- In Canlugas, because of incidents of harassment.
- In Maguing and in Kapatagan, the presence of armed groups in polling precincts.
- In Lumba-Bayabao, a commotion that resulted from voters not being able to find their names on the voters' list.
- In Madalum, the firing of guns.

Disrespect to the people

In Naga City, Alyansa ng Pag-Asa standard-bearer Raul Roco told the INQUIRER that the coalition's national headquarters in Manila had been receiving reports of vote-buying.

"Massive vote-buying has been noticed in the different parts of the countryside," Roco said at around 9:30 a.m. at the Santa Cruz Elementary School, where he voted. "This is a disrespect to the people."

Asked what he would do, he said he would immediately fly back to Manila "to monitor what's happening in the countryside."

In Basilan, residents said gangs were going from house to house buying votes with crisp P500 bills.

Witnesses said enforcers for politicians on the island, a stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf bandit group, woke up people and knocked on storefronts to hand out sample ballots with cash attached.

P500 per voter

At the main polling precinct in the capital Lamitan, "poll watchers" could be seen handing out white envelopes to voters.

MOST common complaint of the day: Voters searching in vain for their names in the voters' list like those in the Manila High School. ERIK ARAZAS

"They've been at it since early this morning, offering as much as P500 per registered voter," said Rolando Lim, whose family owns a store just meters away from a polling booth.

Lim told the AFP that he refused the cash, and declined to name the candidates offering money. "They may get back at me. That's how it works round here," he said.

Hardly anyone among the 166,360 registered voters in Basilan is paying much attention to the rivalry between President Macapagal-Arroyo and the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino's Fernando Poe Jr.

The contest there is between Gov. Wahab Akbar and challenger Jim Hamatam, each of whom reportedly has a private army.

Soldiers toting assault rifles patrolled Lamitan yesterday in a truck fitted with an M-60 machine gun, but the local government said it had received reports that armed men were intimidating voters in surrounding villages.

Indelible ink, etc.

In Cagayan de Oro City, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who is seeking reelection under KNP, had his own complaint: The ink smudged on his forefinger after voting was not indelible because he was able to wash it off with plain alcohol.

The supposedly indelible ink is applied on each voter's forefinger to prevent him/her from voting again.

Pimentel said he decided to test the ink an hour after he voted in his hometown, after being told by five people he knew that they were able to wash it off with alcohol.

After his "cleaning" effort, he said, "it looked as if my fingernail was just dirty."

Pimentel said both the Comelec and the Namfrel had some explaining to do because Namfrel officials had vouched for the indelible ink that the poll body had purchased.

Documents in the dirt

In a slum community in Las Piñas called the CAA Compound, polio victim Jemer de Leon battled through a scrum of neighbors clawing vainly at documents scattered in the dirt.

Comelec officials had earlier abandoned their nearby tent and surrendered a thick sheaf of computer print-outs with the official list of voters to furious residents unable to find their names.

"We've been looking for two hours [for our names]," Jemer, a 20-year-old first-time voter and jobless computer science graduate, told AFP with a wry smile.

Housewife Isabelita Abuel, who was close to tears after a fruitless three-hour search for her name, was irate.

"These people are worthless!" she shouted. "How can a president run this country when the Comelec can't even do its job properly?"

'Brushes with reality'

Abalos, who walked out of his hospital room the other night despite requests for him to be confined because of intestinal bleeding, talked about the Comelec's "brushes with reality" in recent months.

He said the Comelec had been frustrated in its attempts to modernize the voting process.

Faultfinding, mudslinging

"Not everything materialized as we have envisioned. Some of the people whom we trusted to be our partners instead engaged in faultfinding and mudslinging," he said in apparent reference to members of Namfrel.

"Those whom I expected to be fair and balanced gave in to sensationalism and hype, to the detriment of the [Comelec] as perceived by the public. Lamentably, there was nothing that I or anyone could do to stop the spate of senseless violence in many places," he added. *(See story on Page A1)*

The Comelec had planned to modernize the elections through the use of data-capturing machines, automated counting machines, and the Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSAT) for its quick count.

But the P1-billion validation program apparently failed. The P1.3-billion project involving automated counting machines was junked by the Supreme Court, while the P400-million VSAT program remained unresolved before the tribunal.

"Stripped now of all illusions that the May elections could ever be as pristine and as mechanically efficient as we would like these to be, we at the Comelec have had to take a pragmatic approach and make the most out of the options available to us," Abalos said.

More of the same

In Laguna, Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano said voters in one precinct in Paete town were unable to locate their names, while Commissioner Manuel Barcelona said there was ballot shortage in Tawi-Tawi.

In Western Visayas, Commissioner Resurreccion Borra ordered the transfer of ballots from 13 hinterland barangays in Janiuay, Iloilo, to town centers because of the presence of armed goons.

Borra also said Sadain had also recommended the holding of special elections in Calayan, Cagayan, where election paraphernalia had yet to be delivered.

Two government helicopters also failed to transport members of the Board of Election Inspectors to far-flung barangays in Libacao, Aklan, on time, Borra said.

He said special elections had likewise been recommended there.

Borra said many voters were also unable to find their names in precincts in Quezon City, Mandaluyong, Marikina and Muntinlupa, all in Metro Manila. *With reports from Dona Z. Pazzibugan, Philip C. Tubeza, Christine O. Avendaño and Alcuin Pena in Manila; Alan Pelayo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; AFP*

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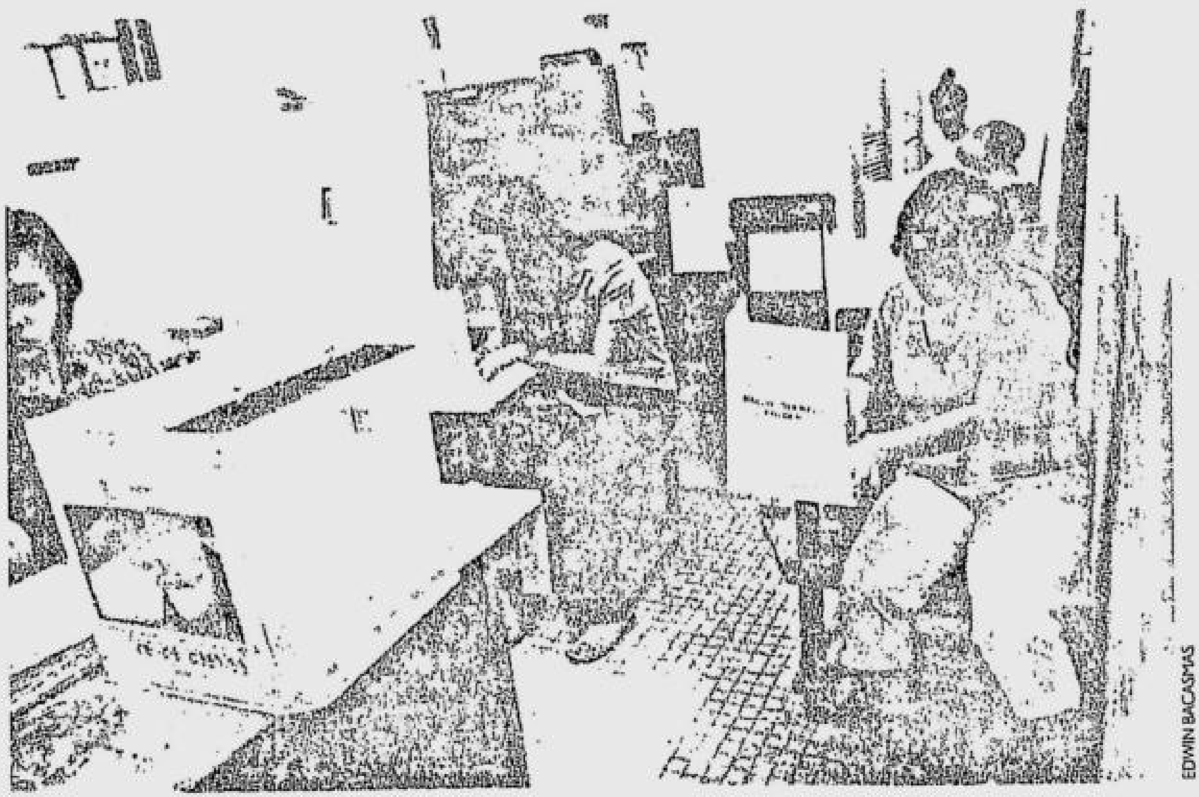

EDWIN BACASMAS

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ERNIE O. SARMIENTO

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Exasperated

Inquirer columnist and Metro Magazine editor Thelma San Juan was among the exasperated ones.

San Juan said she had voted "all these years" at Precinct No. 535-A at the BF Homes Parañaque gym. "All my family members were on the list, but not me. To think I had gone for revalidation months ago."

She sought the help of volunteers of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting and a representative of the Commission on Elections and was given a number to call. "But it was not working," San Juan said. Finally, she checked the Comelec website and got a final answer: she wasn't registered.

Two sons of Inquirer Opinion editor Jorge Aruta, enthusiastic first-time voters at ages 20 and 18, failed to exercise their right as well.

The two arrived at the precinct at 7:30 [illegible] tified voters list. They obtained a certification from the Comelec office in Quezon City hall, but were still not allowed to vote.

Failure of elections

The Comelec itself declared a failure of elections on the islands of Fuga, Camiguin and Babuyan, and in the town of Tineg in Abra, all in northern Luzon, to which it was unable to deliver election paraphernalia purportedly because of bad weather and transport problems.

"Special elections" will be held today in certain barangays in those areas, according to Commissioners Mehol Sadain and Florentino Tuason.

Sadain said the islands had about 3,400 voters and Tineg about 800—figures that Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos immediately dismissed as inconsequential for those seeking national posts.

Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, chief of the Armed Forces' Public Information Office, said a failure of elections had also been declared in five towns of Lanao del Sur for the following reasons:

- In Canlugas, because of incidents of harassment.
- In Maguing and in Kapatagan, the presence of armed groups in polling precincts.
- In Lumba-Bayabao, a commotion that resulted from voters not being able to find their names on the voters' list.
- In Madalum, the firing of guns.

Disrespect to the people

In Naga City, Alyansa ng Pag-Asa standard-bearer Raul Roco told the Inquirer that the coalition's national headquarters in Manila had been receiving reports of vote-buying.

"Massive vote-buying has been noticed in the different parts of the countryside," Roco said at around 9:30 a.m. at the Santa Cruz Elementary School, where he voted. "This is a disrespect to the people."

Asked what he would do, he said he would immediately fly back to Manila "to monitor what's happening in the countryside."

In Basilan, residents said gangs were going from house to house buying votes with crisp P500 bills.

Witnesses said enforcers for politicians on the island, a stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf bandit group, woke up people and knocked on storefronts to hand out sample ballots with cash attached.

P500 per voter

At the main polling precinct in the capi- [illegible] handing out white envelopes to voters.

MOST common complaint of the day: Voters searching in vain for their names in the voters' list like those in the Manila High School. ERIK ARAZAS

"They've been at it since early this morning, offering as much as P500 per registered voter," said Rolando Lim, whose family owns a store just meters away from a polling booth.

Lim told the AFP that he refused the cash, and declined to name the candidates offering money. "They may get back at me. That's how it works round here," he said.

Hardly anyone among the 166,360 registered voters in Basilan is paying much attention to the rivalry between President Macapagal-Arroyo and the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino's Fernando Poe Jr.

The contest there is between Gov. Wahab Akbar and challenger Jim Hamatam, each of whom reportedly has a private army.

Soldiers toting assault rifles patrolled [illegible] an M-60 machine gun, but the local government said it had received reports that armed men were intimidating voters in surrounding villages.

Indelible ink, etc.

In Cagayan de Oro City, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who is seeking reelection under KNP, had his own complaint: The ink smudged on his forefinger after voting was not indelible because he was able to wash it off with plain alcohol.

The supposedly indelible ink is applied on each voter's forefinger to prevent him/her from voting again.

Pimentel said he decided to test the ink an hour after he voted in his hometown, after being told by five people he knew that they were able to wash it off with alcohol.

After his "cleaning" effort, he said, "it looked as if my fingernail was just dirty."

Pimentel said both the Comelec and the Namfrel had some explaining to do because Namfrel officials had vouched for the indelible ink that the poll body had purchased.

Documents in the dirt

In a slum community in Las Piñas called the CAA Compound, polio victim Jemer de Leon battled through a scrum of neighbors clawing vainly at documents scattered in the dirt.

Comelec officials had earlier abandoned their nearby tent and surrendered a thick sheaf of computer print-outs with the official list of voters to furious residents unable to find their names.

"We've been looking for two hours [for our names]," Jemer, a 20-year-old first-time voter and jobless computer science graduate, told AFP with a wry smile.

Housewife Isabelita Abuel, who was close to tears after a fruitless three-hour search for her name, was irate.

"These people are worthless!" she shouted. "How can a president run this country when the Comelec can't even do its job properly?"

'Brushes with reality'

Abalos, who walked out of his hospital room the other night despite requests for him to be confined because of intestinal bleeding, talked about the Comelec's "brushes with reality" in recent months.

He said the Comelec had been frustrated in its attempts to modernize the voting process.

Faultfinding, mudslinging

"Not everything materialized as we have envisioned. Some of the people [illegible] stead engaged in faultfinding and mudslinging," he said in apparent reference to members of Namfrel.

"Those whom I expected to be fair and balanced gave in to sensationalism and hype, to the detriment of the [Comelec] as perceived by the public. Lamentably, there was nothing that I or anyone could do to stop the spate of senseless violence in many places," he added. *(See story on Page A1)*

The Comelec had planned to modernize the elections through the use of data capturing machines, automated counting machines, and the Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSAT) for its quick count.

But the P1-billion validation program apparently failed. The P1.3-billion project involving automated counting machines was junked by the Supreme Court, while the P400-million VSAT program remained unresolved before the tribunal.

"Stripped now of all illusions that the May elections could ever be as pristine and as mechanically efficient as we would like these to be, we at the Comelec have had to take a pragmatic approach and make the most out of the options available to us," Abalos said.

More of the same

In Laguna, Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano said voters in one precinct in Paete town were unable to locate their names, while Commissioner Manuel Barcelona said there was ballot shortage in Tawi-Tawi.

In Western Visayas, Commissioner Resurreccion Borra ordered the transfer of ballots from 13 hinterland barangays in Janiuay, Iloilo, to town centers because of the presence of armed goons.

Borra also said Sadain had also recommended the holding of special elections in Calayan, Cagayan, where election paraphernalia had yet to be delivered.

Two government helicopters also failed to transport members of the Board of Election Inspectors to far flung barangays in Libacao, Aklan, on time Borra said.

He said special elections had likewise been recommended there.

Borra said many voters were [illegible] unable to find their names in precincts in Quezon City, Mandaluyong, Marikina and Muntinlupa, all in Metro Manila. *With reports from Dona Z. Pazzibugan, Philip C. Tubeza, Jr., [illegible] O. Avendaño and Alcuin Pena in Manila; Alan Pelayo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; AFP*

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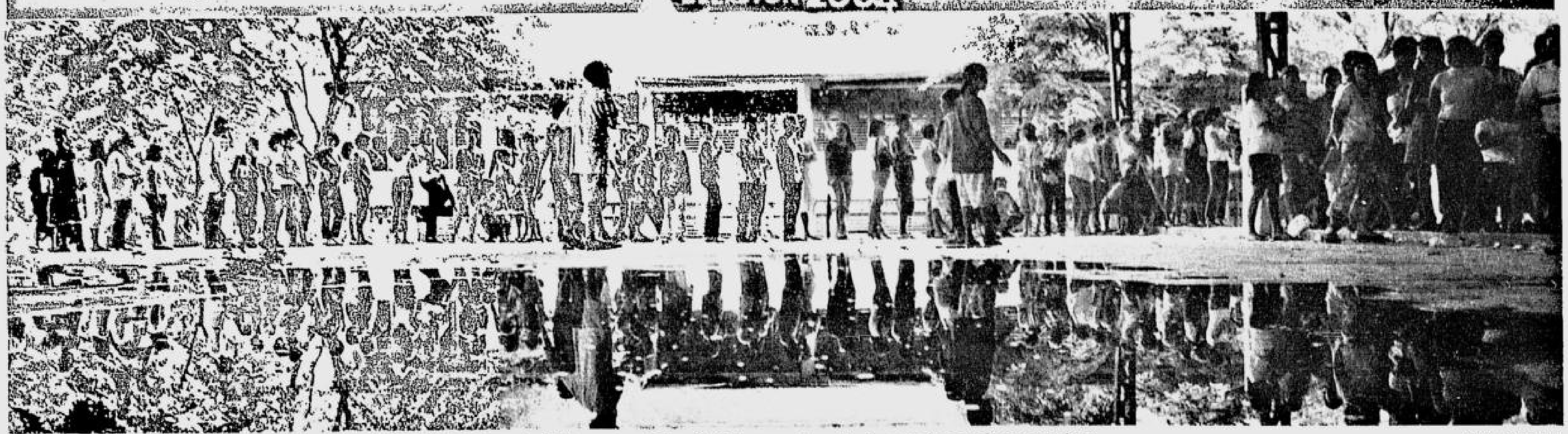
ELEKSYON 2004



WHERE'S my name? This was the problem common to voters in Camarin D Elementary School in Caloocan where the line was long and tempers short.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

BLIND woman in Barangay Greenwater, Baguio, appears to be dictating her preferred candidates.

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

DRESSING down to the bare essentials to prove that their idol FPJ is now an adopted Cordilleran, Nicolas Cawed (at right), the actor's coordinator in Baguio City, and his colleagues Benny Maskay and Benedicto Ballug cast their ballots.

EV ESPIRITU/NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

HIDDEN from view, a Muslim woman votes at the Parang Elementary School in Maguindanao.

RYAN LIM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

ROGER MARGALLO

NAMFREL press conference at its monitoring center at La Salle Greenhills, San Juan, is conducted by Damaso Magbual (left) and Guillermo Luz.

RENDERING to Ceasar what is Ceasar's, nuns troop to the polls Sunday night a day before Election Day to check if their names are on the voters' list in their precinct.

AP

Voter No. 84 came by chopper

From page A1

hometown, but decided to first hear the 8 a.m. Mass at the Palace chapel.

Wearing a checkered blue, green and pink blouse over navy blue slacks, she made her way through a throng of media and *cabalen* at 9:45 a.m. to enter Precinct No. 1A, where her son, Pampanga Vice Gov. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo and her brother Diosdado Macapagal Jr., were also registered. She was the 90th voter to cast her ballot there.

Arroyo, who is running for congressman, arrived in a convoy of several cars and headed straight to the classroom. Realizing there was a line, he promptly backtracked and queued for his turn.

Only Press Secretary Milton Alingod and Lupita Kashiwahara, the President's personal campaign assistant, accompanied Ms Macapagal to Lubao. "She has no (other appointments) so far," Alingod told reporters, who had waited at the school since 4 a.m..

The President read a short statement after casting her vote and, Alingod later said, was back in Malacañang by 11:20 a.m.

Lubao was "solid" for the President, a supporter said, trashing bogus sample ballots supposedly circulated by "Mayor and B.M. (Board Member Lilia) Pineda" that carried Fernando Poe Jr. for president, Sen. Noli de Castro for vice president, and a mixed senatorial slate.

Another sample ballot, apparently the authentic one from Pineda, carried the President and her entire ticket.

'I feel energized'

In Imus, Cavite, Sen. Panfilo Lacson said, beaming, on the day of reckoning: "I had a good night's sleep ... I feel energized."

He said he was leaving the fate of his presidential bid to God, but was leaving nothing to chance as far as preventing election fraud was concerned.

"At the start of the campaign, I said it would be 50 percent hard work and 50 percent I leave to God," Lacson reminded reporters after filling out his ballot yesterday.

Lacson was at the poll precinct at 8:05 a.m. He and his eldest son, Ronald Jay, cast their votes at Precinct 155-A of Bayang Luma Elementary School in his hometown. His wife Alice and their two other sons voted in Parañaque City.

He refused to divulge the other names in his ballot apart from his and that of Carlos Padilla, "my lone senatorial candidate."

Lacson retired to his campaign headquarters in Makati City for the rest of the day. Any candidate who would end up being cheated on account of not being prepared deserved his fate, he said.

The former police chief explained: "All my public life I spent in the military and police. In a war like this, you have to be prepared for everything, including dirty tricks."

FPJ mobbed by media

Poe cast his vote shortly after the polls opened in his neighborhood in San Juan, Metro Manila. The standard-bearer of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino and his wife, movie actress Susan Roces, were mobbed by the media and poll watchers as they made their way to Precinct No. 1227-A at the Xavier School in Barangay Greenhills.

Done by 7:20 a.m., the Poes were the fifth and sixth voters in their precinct. They had taken less than 10 minutes to accomplish their ballots.

But at one point, Poe took out a piece of paper from the breast pocket of his striped pink shirt.

He told reporters later that the sheet had contained names of candidates for San Juan councilors. He explained: "I wanted to get the spelling right."

Like Lacson, he said he had slept well the previous night and was therefore feeling "good ... great." He would spend the rest of the day at home, he said.

Asked whether he thought his political sojourn so far had been worth all the trouble, he replied: "I'd do it again."

Roco jubilant

Raul S. Roco was jubilant when he arrived in a private eight-seater plane at the Sta. Cruz Elementary School in Naga City, where he grew up.

Amid the cheers and applause of family, townmates and supporters, he cast his ballot at 9:30 a.m.

Before he proceeded to Precinct No. 238-A, Voter No. 86 exhorted the crowd, led by media people who had waited for his arrival since 7 a.m.: "Freedom is the only known human institution that lends itself to the development of man and country. And so, it is freedom that we must remember as we vote. Freedom from ignorance, exploitation and corruption."

The "heart" of the Alyansa ng Pag-Asa filled up his ballot under the glare of television lights. He invited the reporters to "see my vote" as he quickly scribbled the names of his party mates, and then opened it to reveal that he had strictly followed his senate slate's acronym, "JCJCGaBaY."

Accompanied by his 87-year-old mother Rosario, his wife Sonia, brothers Suplicio Jr. and Ramon, and son Robbie Pierre, Roco proceeded to shake hands with voters along the way.

"The people have done well," Roco proclaimed in Filipino. "Now, we can truly say the people have the power. To cheat them would be disrespect."

Asked if he could smell victory, he said instead: "I can smell the people blessing us. It is not so much victory as the blessing of the people, the youth, the women and the many poor to whom we dedicated this campaign."

Disembarking from the eight-seater Beechcraft KingAire at the Ayala hangar in Pasay City, Roco declared he would spend the rest of the day at home with his whole family as he awaited for the "people's judgment."

By home, he meant his resthouse in Antipolo City where he planned to "enjoy some fruits."

He hoped yesterday's elections was "the last traditional political exercise" in the Philippines. "Never again should we have something so confused, so unfocused, so uncaring for Philippine welfare."

Silent becomes vocal

In Bulacan, Eduardo "Brother Eddie" Villanueva of the Bangon Pilipinas Movement gathered family members in their home in Bocaue town at 8:15 a.m. before leaving for the voting precinct.

Quoting the Scriptures, as usual, he said he left his fate to God and "the silent majority who are crying for change in government." As he proceeded to Bunlo Elementary School, about 100 meters away, at 8:45 a.m., he declared: "Today, this silent majority will become vocal."

Clad in his usual yellow shirt and black pants, Villanueva then walked to the school with his wife Adoracion, son Joel (who is also seeking a House seat under the Citizens' Battle against Corruption), daughter Joni and her husband Sherwin Tugna, and youngest daughter Jovy.

Villanueva's eldest son Eduardo Jr., who is running for mayor of Bocaue, voted with his local ticket later in the day.

He felt "a sense of fulfillment" as he voted, Villanueva said, because he had done his job. Whatever the outcome of the political exercise, he said, he would have done right by God and history.

Showing not a trace of anxiety or nerves, he greeted every cousin, neighbor and former classmate that he bumped into on the way to the polling place with his V-sign and slogan, "*Babangon na ang Pilipinas!*"

No one could tell just by watching him that he had lagged in the surveys of the two biggest polling firms.

The founder and erstwhile spiritual director of the 3-million-strong Jesus is Lord Church Worldwide was upbeat and said he was looking forward to the election results.

"Once I have the expected victory, it will be the victory of God's plan and the Filipino people. If I lose, it will still be the victory of God's plan because I obeyed his (direction) for the progress of the Philippines," Villanueva said.

If he turns out to be less than the anointed one, the preacher vowed to give his "all-out support" to the winner—but only if the results are "honest, clean and credible." ***Reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana, Norman Bordadora, Christine O. Avendaño, Michael Lim Ubac and Blanche S. Rivera in Manila; Juan Escandor Jr. and Alan Pelayo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Tonette Orejas and Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk; AFP and Reuters***

Losers' agony could ...

From page A1

ers feel even more terrible."

He practically committed social suicide, spending his six months of recovery "writing, and interacting only with family and very close relations."

On a positive note, ever the political reconciliator, De Venecia said of the would-be vanquished in this year's battle: "I will have to visit them."

He did not think the visits would include one with President Macapagal-Arroyo; he was sure she would win by a "large majority," if not by a landslide.

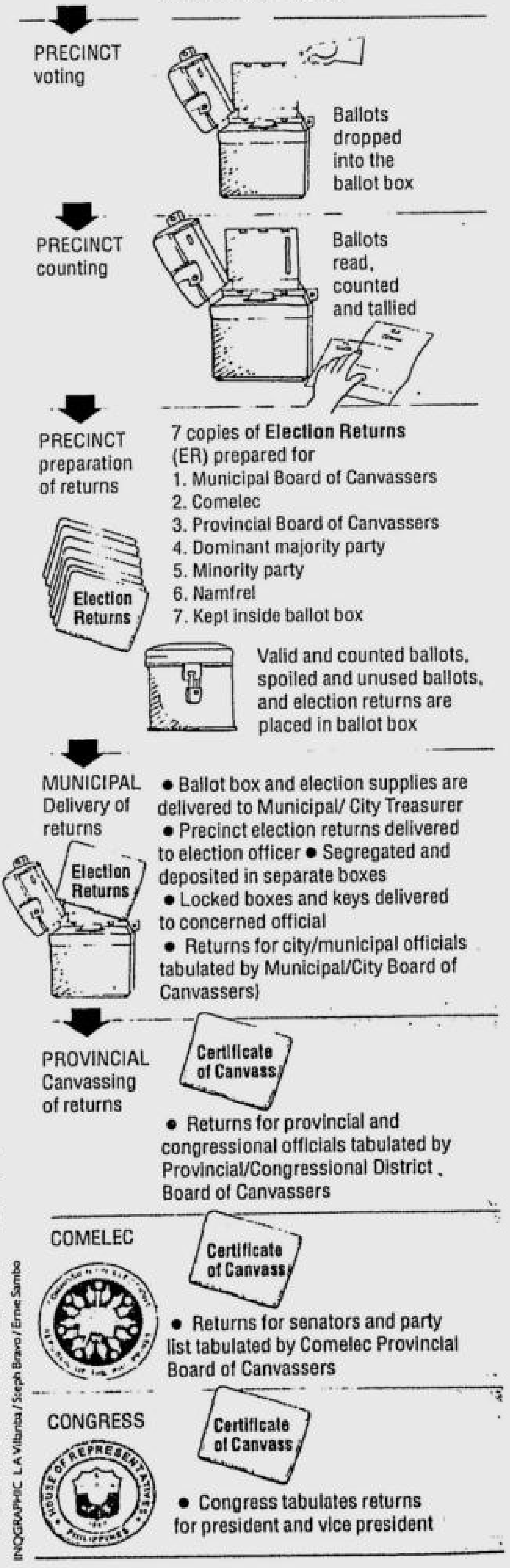
De Venecia's unabashed largesse toward the losers by his own reckoning was directly attributable to a projected personal victory if Ms Macapagal won a fresh six-year term: a change in the country's form of government to a "unicameral parliamentary federal government," of which he was the main proponent.

He predicted that Ms Macapagal would win with a margin of two million to five million votes over the nearest challenger. This, he said, was on account of her high survey ratings and the endorsements of various religious groups.

Technically, Ms Macapagal would not get the majority numbers, De Venecia conceded, but she would still "win big" compared to the poll performances of the country's past presidents.

ELEKSYON 2004

Ballot flow



PRECINCT voting

Ballots dropped into the ballot box

PRECINCT counting

Ballots read, counted and tallied

PRECINCT preparation of returns

7 copies of **Election Returns** (ER) prepared for

1. Municipal Board of Canvassers
2. Comelec
3. Provincial Board of Canvassers
4. Dominant majority party
5. Minority party
6. Namfrel
7. Kept inside ballot box

Valid and counted ballots, spoiled and unused ballots, and election returns are placed in ballot box

MUNICIPAL Delivery of returns

- Ballot box and election supplies are delivered to Municipal/ City Treasurer
- Precinct election returns delivered to election officer
- Segregated and deposited in separate boxes
- Locked boxes and keys delivered to concerned official
- Returns for city/municipal officials tabulated by Municipal/City Board of Canvassers)

PROVINCIAL Canvassing of returns

- Returns for provincial and congressional officials tabulated by Provincial/Congressional District Board of Canvassers

COMELEC

- Returns for senators and party list tabulated by Comelec Provincial Board of Canvassers

CONGRESS

- Congress tabulates returns for president and vice president

INQGRAPHIC L.A Villanba / Steph Bravo / Ernie Sambo

Eusebio heaves big sigh of relief

By Luige del Puerto

MAYORAL candidate Vicente "Enteng" Eusebio scored an important legal victory yesterday after Commission on Elections chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. ordered a temporarily halt to the implementation of an earlier decision disqualifying him.

The legal battle, however, is far from over. Abalos' directive only means Eusebio is still considered a candidate at press time. The Comelec en banc would still have to meet, and decide to either favor or junk the former mayor's petition.

At his headquarters in Pasig, Eusebio heaved a big sigh of relief as he showed reporters a copy of Abalos' memorandum to National Capital Region Comelec Director Esmeralda Amora-Ladra.

He had it immediately distributed to schools and barangays.

"Without this," he said, waving a copy of the memorandum, "it would have been over for me already," he said, acknowledging for the first time that the Comelec has indeed disqualified him.

"My wife (Mayor Soledad Eusebio) does not want to be my substitute. She does not want to be mayor anymore," he said, adding his temporary victory is a "victory for residents" as well.

Rep. Henry Lanot, who is running for mayor, had sought to have Eusebio disqualified for early campaigning and vote-buying.

On May 5, the Comelec ordered the city's election officers to "delete" and "cancel" Eusebio's name from the city's certified list of candidates.

Surprised

The decision caught the former mayor by surprise.

It also directed the Board of Election Inspectors "not to count the votes" cast for Eusebio because they would be considered "stray."

The timing could not have been worse. Confusion hit the city on the eve of election day as reports of Eusebio's disqualification flew fast and thick.

On Saturday night, Eusebio was still denying the existence of the Comelec decision, signed by Commissioners Resurreccion Z. Borra, Rufino S. Javier and Virgilio O. Garcillano.

Reconsideration

Yesterday, Eusebio maintained he learned of his disqualification only on Saturday. His camp immediately filed the motion for reconsideration at 6 a.m. the next day.

He suspects someone deliberately hid the decision from him. "Whoever hid the May 5 decision almost had a mayor elected in Pasig without the people's movement," he declared.

Abalos's decision, meanwhile, came out around 8 a.m., an hour after the start of voting.

SAMPLE BALLOTS FLOOD POLLING PLACES

Last-minute black propaganda

By Tina Santos

BLACK propaganda materials and thousands of sample ballots yesterday flooded Quezon City as competing candidates made last-ditch efforts to capture votes on election day.

At least eight young people, mostly teenagers, who claimed to be supporters of congressional aspirant Mike Planas, stood a few meters from the polling precincts at the Cubao Elementary School and E. Rodriguez Elementary School and distributed sample ballots against another congressional candidate, Matias Defensor.

Three of the boys, aged 17, handed out sample ballots which erroneously cited Defensor as a city council candidate. On the space for congressman, the sample ballots had the name of Planas.

Planas and Defensor are both running for Congress in QC's third district.

There were also boys aged 12 and 13 handing out leaflets accusing reelectionist city council candidates of simply "acting" in office or having a Porsche and BMW while claiming to be poor.

The leaflets targeted both opposition and administration candidates.

Several 14 and 16-year-old boys were also seen distributing sample ballots near the schools in Payatas, Bernardo and Batasan Hills.

The boys told the INQUIRER that a certain "Negro" told them to distribute the sample ballots in exchange for P100 each.

Quezon City mayoral candidate Feliciano Belmonte did not escape the mudslinging.

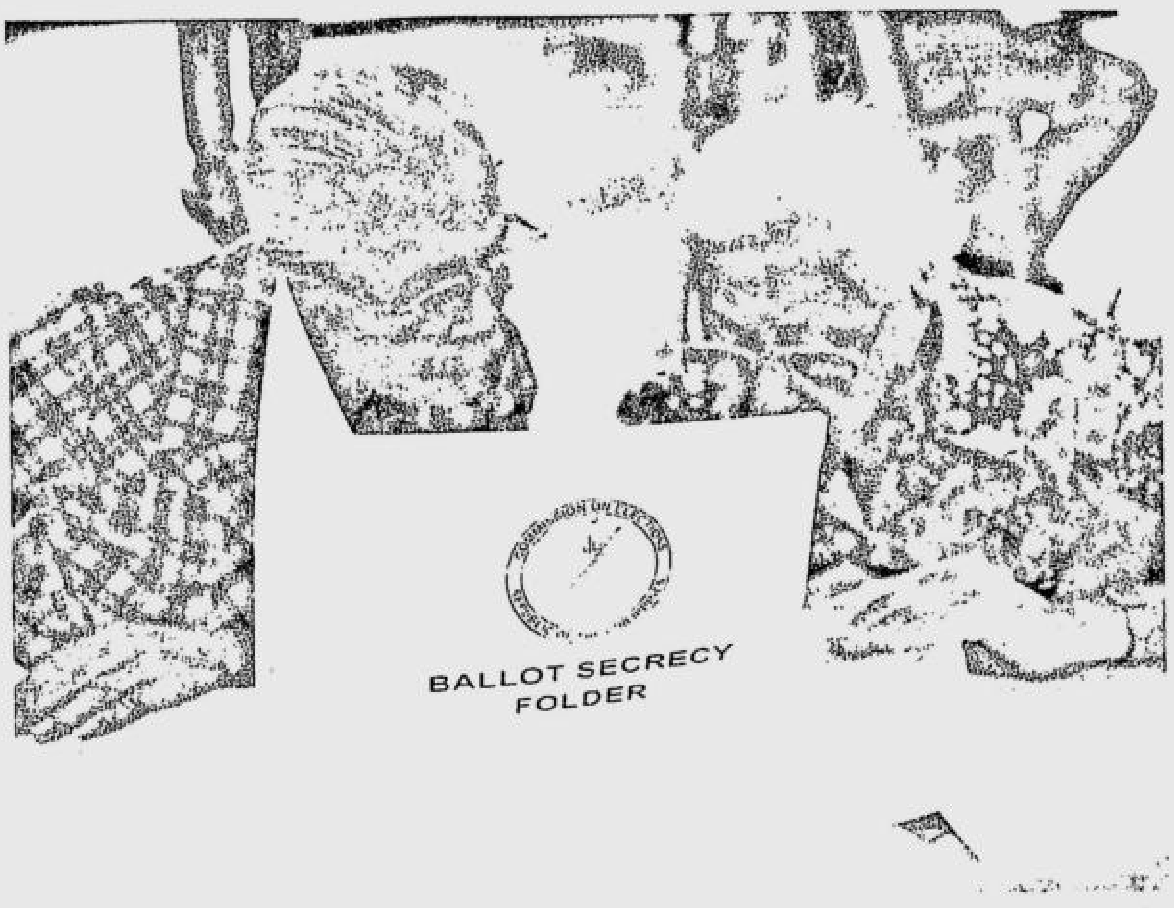
A female resident of Payatas, who refused to be named, showed the INQUIRER a fake P500 bill with Belmonte's smiling face superimposed on that of national hero Ninoy Aquino.

Written on the bills were: "*Ang salaping ito ay bayad para sa boto* (This bill is for the payment of votes)," and "In pay we trust."

On the other side of the bill were written "*Iba na ang mukhang pera, pabibili ka ba?* (Will you let yourself be bought?)"

The woman said it was handed to her by a man who asked her to vote for Belmonte's rival, former mayor Ismael Mathay Jr.

The INQUIRER tried to get the comment of Planas and Mathay but their phones were turned off. *With Mel Lawrence de Guzman*



LUZ KAHN, 91, and her maid of 48 years, Magdalena Catangay, 75, consult each other as they write their choice of candidates on the ballot at their precinct in Barangay Forbes Park, Makati City. ERNIE U SARMIENTO

Elderly, disabled make sure their votes will count

SENIOR citizens, together with the poor, the rich and the disabled, trooped to polling precincts yesterday, united in their quest for a golden era for Filipinos.

Etched in their faces is their strong faith in democracy and the country's electoral system.

In Valle Verde, one of Metro Manila's richest enclaves, a caregiver wheeled an old, rich lady into a polling booth around 9 a.m.

They may be divided by generation and wealth, but yesterday, they had only one business—to choose the country's next set of leaders.

"I'm voting because I'm well," said 85-year-old Nieves Magpayo, who went to the precinct for the first time on a wheelchair.

Duty to vote

Her daughter, Bernadette, 52, explained that her mom believes it is her duty to vote, if she were well enough to do it.

Their helper, Rostica Ampo, 51, a native of Bohol, says this has been the way the family does it since she came here decades ago.

The disabled also arrived at polling precincts to show that their vote counts, like those of normal persons.

Retired physician Ruben Anlacan, 72, suffered from a stroke years ago. To walk, he takes little strides with helpers assisting him. But yesterday, Anlacan was among the first to arrive at the Xavier School in San Juan.

Sister Angelita Olimba, 65, also on wheelchair, was joined by two colleagues from the Missionary of the Immaculate Conception. She gave a shy smile when asked why she's voting.

"I really like to vote," she said. "It's our responsibility."

Volunteers

At the Putatan Elementary School in Muntinlupa, several senior citizens volunteered to assist voters in finding their names and precincts.

Miserata T. Astorga, 67, of the Alyansang Repormang Bayan, led a team of 10 volunteers.

Astorga said she wanted to do something worthwhile. She believes she will live longer because her task provides her with some exercise, just like her mother, who lived more than a hundred years.

Melchor R. Balute, 65, offered his free service to watch for a candidate and help voters find their precincts.

Balute admitted that his task of guiding people is "tiring but fulfilling" because he sees the voters and how they feel about the elections.

Making a choice

Despite missing his left leg, Constancio Kem-Ing, 69, wheeled from his house on Topacio Street in San Andres Bukid, Manila, to the Rafael Palma Elementary School on Vito Cruz to vote.

"People have to exercise their choice. I keep on voting because I would like to help the country," said Kem-Ing, a retired company driver.

Kem-Ing expressed hope that the nation's situation could still be better. "It might still change. I am hoping that the government would help the people." *Luige del Puerto, Michael Jobert Navallo, Tarra Quismundo and Jaycee Perez*

2 prisoners stabbed dead in prison riot

By Margaux Ortiz

TWO INMATES from rival gangs were killed in a riot at the Pasay City Jail on Sunday night.

Roberto Navarra, 31, a Sputnik member, and Roberto Santos, 46, a Batang City Jail member, were stabbed to death, while another BCJ member, Randy Ponferada, suffered superficial wounds on the left shoulder and arm.

According to Jail Inspector Asyncrito Encio, the riot began around 6:30 p.m. when Enrico de Asis, a Sputnik member, stabbed Ponferada without any apparent reason.

A riot ensued, leaving Navarra with stab wounds on the face, chest and back, and Santos with a stab wound on the neck and a broken jaw.

Encio said they had to ask assistance from the Philippine National Police Special Weapons and Tactics team to pacify the rival groups.

Encio said the inmates used improvised bladed weapons during the riot.

Atienza, Lopez both claim election win

THE FIRST tallies had yet to be completed but supporters of both Manila Mayor Joselito Atienza and his rival Mel Lopez were already claiming landslide victories in yesterday's elections.

"I am confident that the Liberal Party-Buhayin ang Maynila ticket is headed for an unprecedented landslide victory," Atienza said in a press statement.

The incumbent cited the reason for his confidence as the "solid track record" and "very effective campaign" of his party.

After casting his vote at Precinct 768 at the Rafael Palma Elementary School in San Andres Bukid at 8:36 a.m., Atienza already thanked residents for their continuing support for his administration and for his ticket.

Around the city, streamers saying "MayniLA, Panalo Na. Salamat" were already hung even as polling officially closed.

One such streamer, in the meantime, at the corner of Quirino Avenue and Linao Street declared victory for Atienza's son, Kim.

"Panalo na Congressman Kim Atienza," the streamer shouted.

Kim is seeking the congressional seat for Manila's 5th district.

The mayor's son said his supporters put up the streamer.

Enthusiastic

"They are very enthusiastic to see me in Congress. I know I will win and I'd like to thank my supporters.

But Lopez, who is seeking to pull the seat from under Atienza, expressed similar confidence of victory.

In a statement, Lopez predicted a landslide victory in four of Manila's six districts, namely: Tondo, Binondo, Sta. Cruz and Quiapo. *Tarra Quismundo*

Error-riddled...

From page A20

disabled and yet our precinct is very far and steep," Kitan said, adding they have been waiting for assistance for an hour.

In Makati City, the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting reported that more than 100 voters complained that their names were either misspelled or missing from the CVLs.

1,000 appeal

More than 1,000 Muntinlupa City residents appealed at the Comelec office because their names were not in the CVLs at their respective precincts.

Efren Dehano, of Soldier's Hills, said more than half of the registered voters in their subdivision could not find their names in the master list.

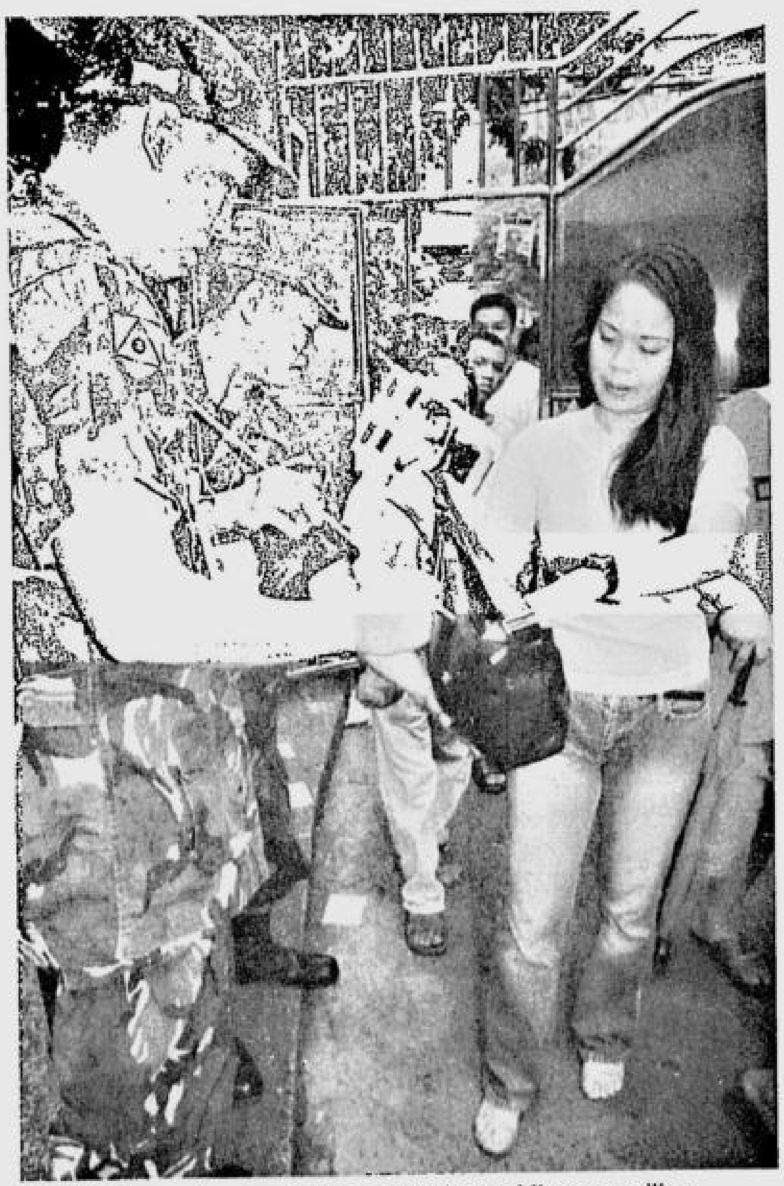
In Taguig, Master Sgt. Pepito Gayap said voters had to wait for hours because the Board of Election Inspectors arrived late.

Defective key

On the other end of Metro Manila, at the Potrero Elementary School in Malabon City, the elections were delayed by almost an hour at Precinct No. 648A-B because the ballot box could not be opened.

The key provided by the Comelec could not open the lock on the ballot box.

At about 8 a.m., the school supervisor said the Comelec had allowed election inspectors to destroy the lock on the box so the polling could be started.



A VOTER opens her bag for inspection by a soldier at a polling precinct in Ramon Magsaysay High School in España, Manila. ERIK ARAZAS

At the North Bay Boulevard South Elementary School, voters and teachers had to endure the heat and discomfort of holding the elections in the school's narrow corridors and stage.

Principal Gualberto Luna said they only had 15 rooms that hosted 44 precincts.

A unique case in politics

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

A MAN'S dedication to his job is measured when he insists on working even if his physical condition doesn't allow him because he is needed.

Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. defied his doctors' orders and checked out of the hospital so he could oversee the elections yesterday.

Although his spirit was willing, his body was too weak to go to the Comelec office or go around. He had to stay home and supervise his people by remote control.

If there's a better display of dedication to the job by a government official, tell me.

* * *

Abalos did not have to go out of the hospital to oversee yesterday's polls and the counting of ballots nationwide. He could have done it from his hospital bed.

But his doctors wouldn't have allowed him to do that. A hospital patient needs rest. But Abalos couldn't rest because his mind was on his job.

A hardheaded patient like Abalos is every doctor's nightmare.

* * *

Noel "Toti" M. Cariño, who is running for the lone congressional district of Pasig, is a reelectionist who took over as congressman a few days before yesterday's election.

How did that happen, you'll ask.

Cariño defeated Henry Lanot in the May 14, 2001 election. But he didn't win in the counting of votes. Lanot was proclaimed the winner.

Cariño's protest with the House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal dragged on for three years. Finally, he was declared winner by the HRET on Jan. 22, 2004.

Cariño claims Lanot offered to step down as long as he would get a share of the remaining pork barrel fund allocated for Pasig. Cariño refused Lanot's offer because, he said, it was illegal and immoral.

Because of his refusal, Cariño said Lanot filed a motion for reconsideration on the HRET's decision.

On Feb. 26, 2004, the HRET denied with finality Lanot's motion.

Cariño asked Speaker Jose de Venecia to swear him in as Pasig congressman. But De Venecia, ever the politician who doesn't want to rock the boat, refused, saying he didn't want to antagonize Lanot.

Lanot by that time had already joined De Venecia's Lakas party and was a standard-bearer in the mayoralty race in Pasig.

To add to Carino's woes, Lanot filed with the Supreme Court a petition disallowing him from taking over as Pasig congressman.

On April 27, 2004, the high court decided in favor of Cariño.

* * *

Question: If Cariño wins in this election, will the three-term provision for congressmen and congresswomen also apply to him?

Remember Cariño was not able to serve out the term that he won in the May 14, 2001 election.

Will Cariño be considered a reelectionist or a first-termer?

Cariño's is a unique case.

Error-riddled CVLs wreak havoc on polling

By the INQUIRER Metro Staff

THE ELECTIONS in Metro Manila was a virtual repeat of any other elections: The atmosphere was peaceful, but cases of voters not finding their names in the certified lists and incomplete voters' lists marred the polls.

In many cases, people went home frustrated, unable to cast their votes.

In Parañaque, five suspected flying voters were arrested after residents in Barangay San Dionisio's Lim Compound became suspicious of the suspects, who were strangers.

Alma's voters?

San Dionisio Special Operation Group operative Expedito Basalim identified the five as Marlon Boten, 23; Pearly Esmores, 27; John Ledesma, 30; Yolanda Salameo, 29; and Karen Corporal, 20, all of Pasay City.

Boten told the authorities that they were recruited by a certain Erwin to vote for Alma Moreno in exchange for P300.

However, Moreno's camp denied any link with the suspects.

"We are for clean and honest elections. And we don't have the capacity to do that," Dr. Rodolfo Punzalan, Moreno's spokesperson, told the INQUIRER.

Pockets of chaos

Pockets of chaos and confusion marked the elections in the eastern part of the metropolis.

At the Pinagbuhatan Elementary School in Pasig City, Commission on Elections computer experts were overwhelmed by the number of irate—and at times teasing—residents who could not find their names or precincts.

"Maybe my ballot has already been filled up," said Juanito Gaspar, 30. The comment invited cheers from other voters.

But Pinagbuhatan Elementary School principal Erlinda Jose said the number of voters who have complained was insignificant. Her school has around 8,500 voters.

Gates closed

In San Juan, a Namfrel officer at the Xavier School complained that the gates were closed at 3 p.m., even when there were still voters outside. The Comelec ordered the guards to open gate minutes after.

Even in the usually efficient city of Marikina, a number of registered voters found themselves going back to the local Comelec office to verify their status.

Over in Mandaluyong City, more than 6,000 voters from Barangka Ibaba, accustomed to voting at the Bonifacio Javier Elementary School, had to cast their ballots in Mandaluyong Science High School instead.

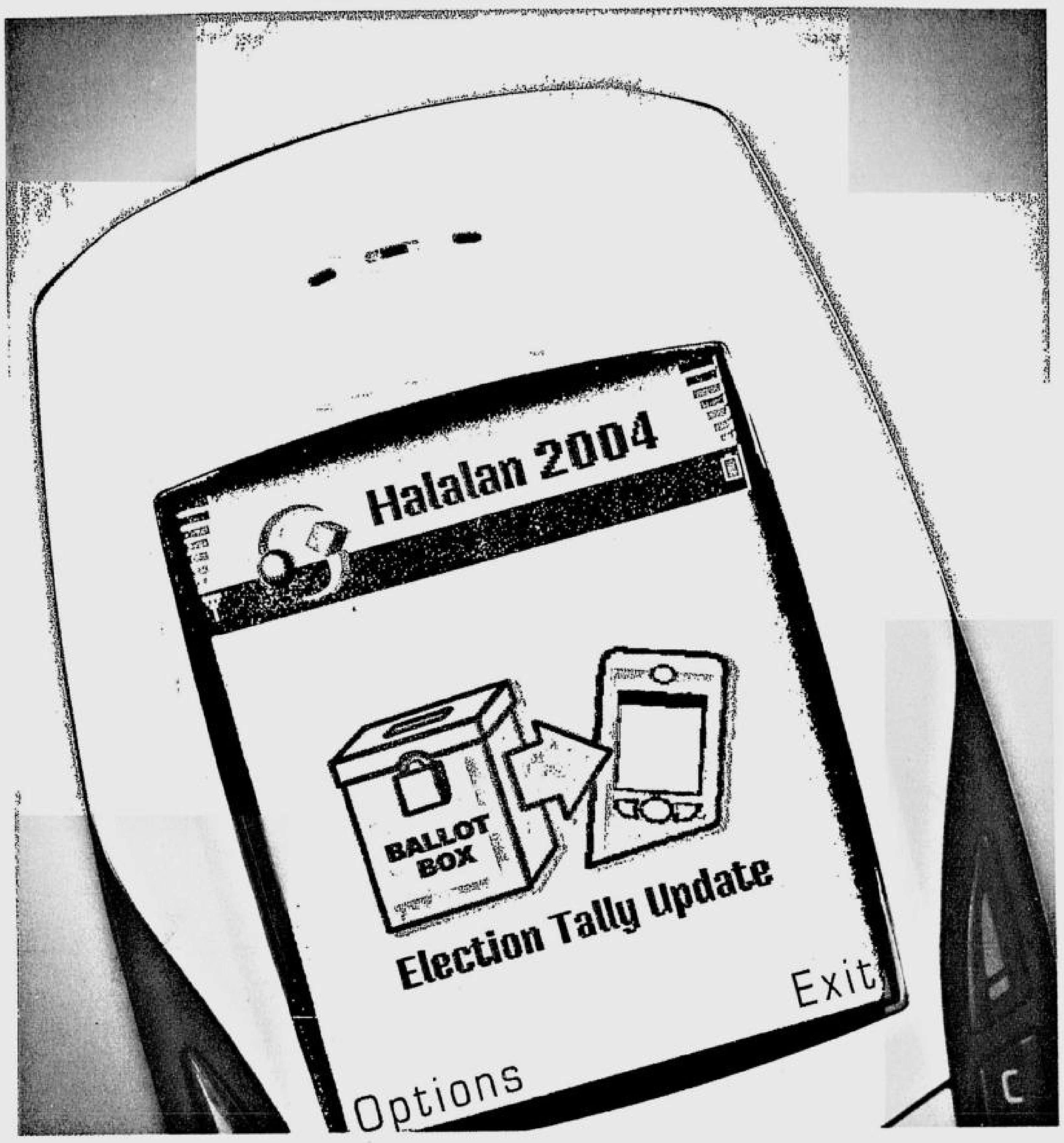
Transfer of school

The Comelec transferred 30 out of the barangay's 46 precincts upon learning that a part of the Bonifacio Javier Elementary building was "demolished" and could only accommodate a limited number of voters.

At the Mayamot Elementary School in Antipolo City, Marivic Kitan, 38, and her husband, Augustine, 28, both disabled, complained of lack of assistance from school personnel.

"Our voter's ID clearly states that we are

ERROR-RIDDLED/ A1



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Tanong ng Bayan

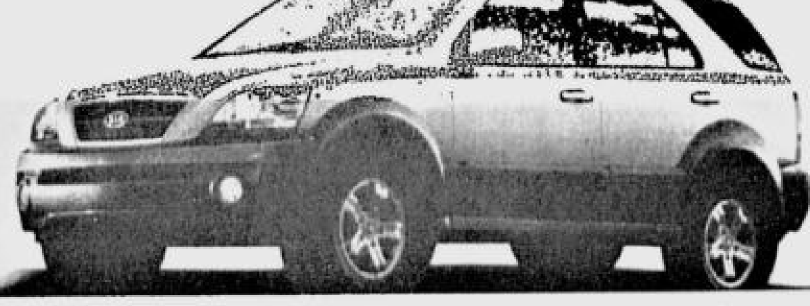
INQ TV

Ngayong Alas-10 Ng Gabi

Sa mata ng dayuhan, maayos ba ang halalan?

Higit isang-daang foreign observers, kasali na ang mga taga-media, ang nag-monitor ng halalan kahapon. Kapanipaniwala ba ang eleksyon, sa tingin nila? Sundan ang isang election observer mula sa Afghanistan, at dingin ang sagot ng isang Hapon nakabase sa Taiwan at ng mga mamahayag mula sa Washington Post at BBC News. Ngayong alas-10 ng gabi, sa ABC.

ABC



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SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

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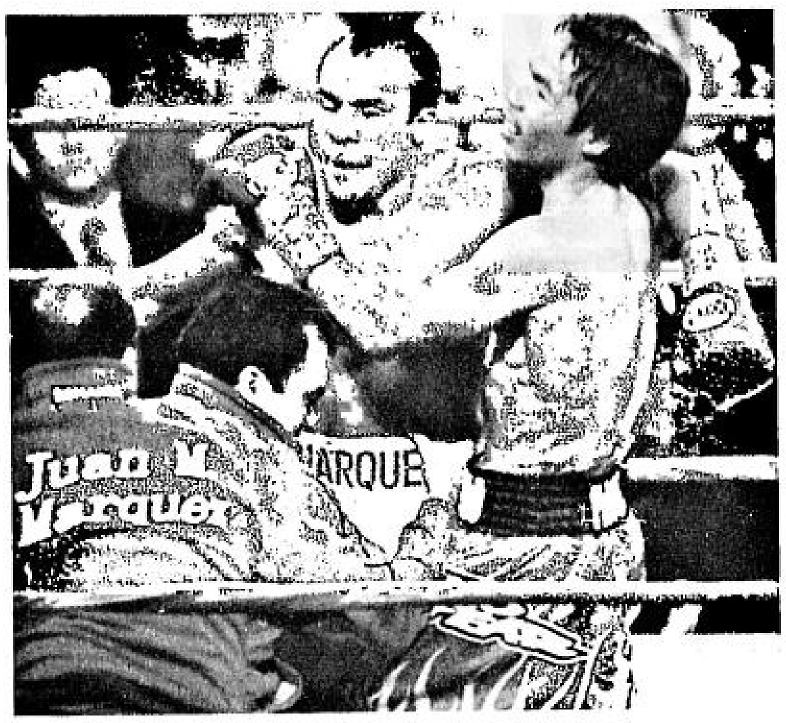
BASKETBALL: 2004 NBA Playoffs - Pacers vs Heat, Game 3, Eastern Semifinals; 8 a.m.; Solar Sports; Timberwolves vs Kings, Game 3, Western Semifinals; 6:30 p.m.; IBC 13 - Miami hopes to burn Indiana at home while cow bells will be ringing in Sacramento as it hosts Minnesota.

NBA Greatest Game - Celtics vs Lakers, Game 4, 1984 Finals; 11 a.m.; Solar Sports - After losing Game 3, 137-104, Boston's Larry Bird challenges his teammates to overcome and endure. Celtics won



PACQUIAO (right) and Marquez hug each other at the end of their bloody, furious title fight Sunday in Las Vegas. REUTERS

Pacquiao protest set

Fight judge admits first-round scoring error

By Recah Trinidad

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In fact, the fight judge who scored it 10-7 instead of an apt 10-6 after Pacquiao knocked down Juan Manuel Marquez three times in the opening round admitted to the mistake on Sunday.

"I just screwed up. I feel badly because I dropped the ball, plainly and simply," said Mark Clements of Nevada whose final score could've made the difference if not for the slip.

He scored it 113-all. John Stewart of New Jersey picked Pacquiao, 115-110, while Canada's Jay Gutras, whose conduct was also questioned, voted 115-110 for Marquez.

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It used to be that a 10-6 score was not allowed, but this was in fights where the 3-knockdown rule was in effect.

"Before three knockdowns was only 10-7. I take full responsibility for it," Clemens explained. "It was not that I was unaware. I just screwed it."

Had he called it right, his card would've totaled 114-113 and Pacquiao would've automatically been declared winner.

(The two other judges both scored the first round 10-6 for Pacquiao).

The grievous error resulted in a controversial split draw that had Marquez escaping with both his IBF and WBA featherweight belts.

The supervisor of the Pacquiao-Marquez fight, however, said it was a judgment call.

But even before the admission of error, Team Pacquiao had questioned the conduct of the referee and two judges and announced it would file a protest.

Murad Muhammad, Pacquiao's promoter here, said the result was unacceptable.

He said he was in the process

PACQUIAO/ A22

Tañamor a win away from Athens

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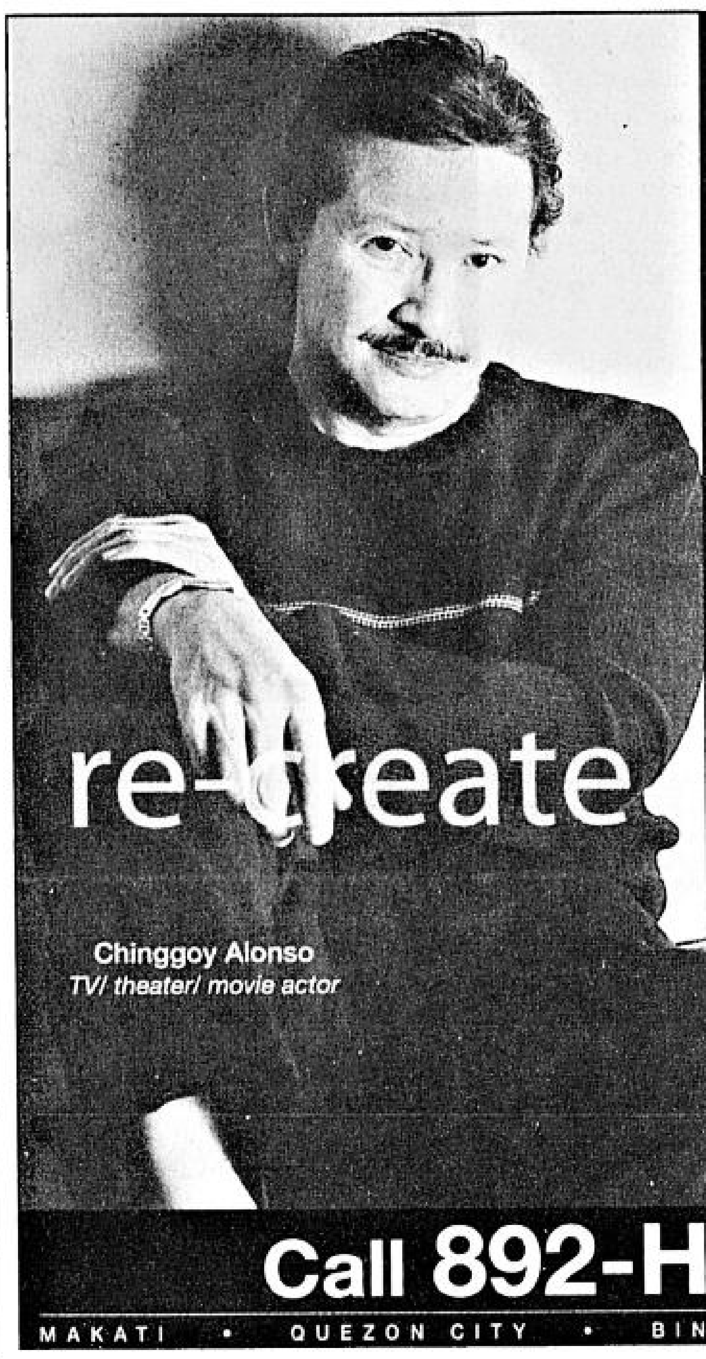

Chinggoy Alonso
TV/ theater/ movie actor

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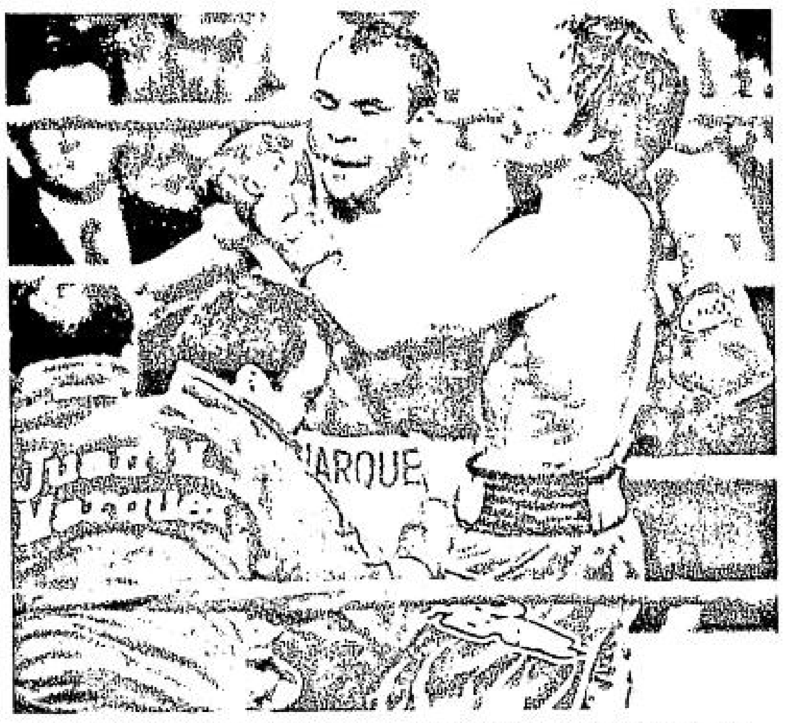

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NCFP 'owns right' to age group chess

THE NATIONAL Chess Federation of the Philippines (NCFP) owns the exclusive right to organize and stage the National Age Group and National Junior Chess Championships.

NCFP president Mat Defensor made this clarification yesterday to resolve the question on which body has sole jurisdiction over the events.

Defensor said the NCFP welcomes other well-meaning organizers to hold similar tournaments, but stressed that they cannot use the word, "national."

"Only the national federation has the right to use it," Defensor clarified.

Defensor recently signed a memorandum of agreement with Primanila Realty and Development Corp. chief executive officer Ed Madrid for the holding of the National Age Group on May 17-21 and the National Juniors on May 24-28, both to be held at the Marketplace in Mandaluyong.

DEFENSOR

The clarification was prompted by another report that another group is holding its own National Age Group and National Juniors tournament with Fide (the World Chess Federation) confirming the staging of the events on May 21-25 and June 1-5, respectively at the Trade Hall, Starmall, Shaw Boulevard in Mandaluyong.

NCFP secretary-general Sammy Estimo said Fide has nothing to do with the staging of local tournaments except when it is requested to rate the events.

"Other than that, Fide statutes forbid meddling in the internal affairs of national federations," said Estimo, adding he would inform Fide members about the situation.

Meanwhile, more than 100 Milo Checkmate students will participate in the NCFP age-group championships, according to Metropolitan Chess Club president Mila Emperado. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

Samsung Jungolf Tour resumes at Orchard

THE TWO world renowned courses of the Orchard Golf and Country Club in Dasmariñas, Cavite, play host to the Samsung Philippine Jungolf Tour starting today with at least a hundred youngsters seeing action. Tee-off time is 8 a.m.

Orchard, host of the 1995 Johnnie Walker Classic, is again providing its Palmer and Player championship courses free to the country's top junior players in support of the talent development thrust of the Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines.

Siblings Crystal Faith, Wolen and Princess Superal, who are unbeaten when they play together, head the entries for the tourney serving as the sixth leg of the Tour, which is also given major backing by the International Container Terminal Services Inc. and Philippine Airlines as the official carrier.

Another attraction in the leg supported by Unilever and Gonads is Terence Macatangay, the teener from Batangas who is seeking his third consecutive victory after posting back-to-back wins in the Malarayat and Tat Filipinas legs.

Jungolf president Luigi Tabuena said that with the Tour entering its homestretch, the kids who have qualified for the Callaway Junior World and planning to play in events like the Optimist International and US Kids World in the US are hard-pressed to hit their peak.

'The Greatest' calls Manny the Small Ali

By Recah Trinidad

LAS VEGAS, Nevada —He emerged empty-handed from his grim title quest, but Manny Pacquiao woke up Sunday crowned with a glorious assurance that he did win over WBA/IBF featherweight titleholder Juan Manuel Marquez of Mexico.

The appreciation came in the form of a phone call.

The caller: Muhammad Ali.

Not just a namesake of The Greatest, but the real Ali.

The message was transmitted to Pacquiao early Sunday here by Murad Muhammad, his promoter in the US who was part of the fabulous Team Ali in the past.

"You know who called me this morning?" reported the excited Murad at the Rainforest Restaurant of the MGM Grand where Pacquiao was presented a key to the city. "Muhammad Ali, he asked me to tell Manny he won the fight clear."

Added Murad: "Ali was very excited. He called Manny the Small Ali because he said he got the gifts and the heart. He said Manny was a real warrior, a winner. The real thing. He likened Manny to himself who would fight the best and would not give up no matter what."

Murad said Ali felt extremely appreciative after he informed the boxing great that Pacquiao had to box injured starting the second round when his left fist started to swell.

"In that case, tell him he could use the name Thrilla in Manila if a rematch is staged in the Philippines," Murad quoted Ali as offering.

Pacquiao business manager Rod Nazario had offered Manila as site for a projected rematch between Pacquiao and Marquez whose monumental bout on Saturday ended in a split draw following the questionable scoring of two judges.

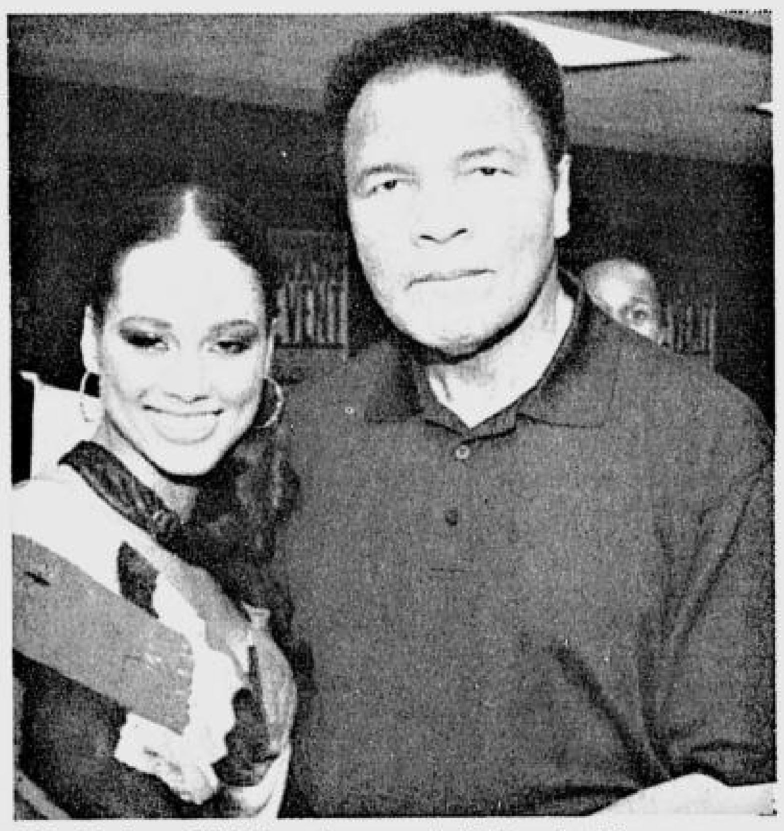
Murad said Ali, who must be calling from his home, watched the championship on Saturday and talked on the phone for over 20 minutes Sunday morning.

"I'm telling you all what he had told me in less than five minutes, because you know how Ali talks now," Murad said referring to the slow, slurred speech of the boxing immortal who has been suffering from Parkinson's Disease Syndrome.

It could not be readily ascertained if Pacquiao, who was cornered by autograph hunters in a half-lit end of the tropical restaurant, had already gotten the Ali message.

Pacquiao, appearing relieved and fresh despite a cut over his right eye, found a brief break from excited fans to confirm with the INQUIRER that he hurt his left hand after he slammed and decked Marquez for the third time in the first round Saturday.

Pacquiao also blamed a flimsy pair of socks for the blisters which ruined his momentum and balance during the fight.



ALI with singer Alicia Keys: Impressed with Pacquiao's bravery AFP

On the whole, Pacquiao surmised he was only 60 percent of himself against Marquez, unlike against Marco Antonio Barrera whom he stopped with a sustained, fiery attack last year.

Although Pacquiao's offensive sputtered, his handlers rated his suspect chin excellent after it withstood several jarring blows by Marquez during the furious exchanges.

It was the first time Pacquiao had gone 12 rounds in a world championship.

Majority of those who placed bets in the Race and Sports Book counter at the ground floor of the city-like, 5,000-room MGM Grand picked Pacquiao to win by knockout.

But the bookmakers ended up making a killing after only a few wagered on a draw which closed with odds of 12/1 and paid $120 for $10.

Team Pacquiao leaves Las Vegas Tuesday, after a tour of the Grand Canyon, and is expected in Manila Thursday morning.

SPORTSWATCH

Cebu five whips Spring, tops NBC caging

ILOILO CITY—Reigning CBF President's Cup champion Cebu-GMC added another title to its collection Sunday night by beating Spring Cooking Oil-Laguna, 86-73, in the finals of the Panasonic Iloilo-NBC pre-season basketball tournament at the University of San Agustin gym here. Chico Lanete exploded with 35 points, including 13 in the final quarter, to seal the victory of the Cebuanos owned by Ms Kitty Uytengsu-Tan, managed by Robert Tan and coached by Jun Tan. Lanete, who was eventually named most valuable player, led the Cebuanos' comeback from a 39-40 halftime deficit. Host Iloilo Warriors finished third by whipping the Baguio Cardinals, 113-98. "It was a successful pre-season series," noted National Basketball Conference secretary general Tito Palma of the Laguna, Cagayan de Oro and Iloilo games sponsored by Panasonic and Sulpicio Lines. GMC team manager Ray Allan Lataza and NBC will hold a press conference at the Baseline Restaurant in Cebu City on May 14 to formalize the Uytengsu group's entry into the NBC.

Paragua rules Wright chess

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—International Master Mark Paragua ruled the 2004 Wright Molintas Sr. Memorial Open Active Chess Championship Sunday night at the Aspulan Cafe here. Paragua, the country's most bemedalled athlete in the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games, defeated National Master Andrew Vasquez in the sixth round and then drew with NM Alex Milagrosa in the seventh and final round to finish with 6.5 points and bag the P10,000 top purse. Asian Cities board 4 gold medalist IM Jayson Gonzales downed dentist Jenny Mayor and wound up with 6 points. Gonzales received the runner-up prize of P5,000. Tied for 3rd to 5th places with 5.5 points each were NM Milagrosa, IM Richard Bitoon and Baguio bet Ronaldo Alvez. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

Subic Bay serves up Nat'l Open tennis

PHILIPPINE tennis gets a much-needed lift with the staging of the 2004 National Open Championships at the Subic Bay Freeport Zone on May 16-May 23. The country's top netters and Davis Cup team members, led by last year's champion Johnny Arcilla, Adelo Abadia, Joseph Victorino, and fast-rising Patrick John Tierro, are seeing action in the tournament. Competition will be in the men's and women's singles, men's and women's doubles and the popular Inter-Club Team Tennis event, won by Philippine Columbian Association in 2002 and 2003. The tournament, sanctioned by the Philippine Tennis Association, will be held at the Subic Bay International Tennis Center (SBITC), a fast growing destination and venue for training programs and sporting events. This year's Inter-Club champion will recieve the Chairman Felicito Payumo Trophy in honor of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority chair for his contribution to the development of local tennis. "We are proud to host this event, now in its third year in Subic Bay," says former Davis Cupper Virgilio "Beeyong" Sison, president of the organizing Subic Bay Sports Management Inc. who runs the tournament.

TITLE FIGHT BACKERS: John Milne, chair of the Springboard Foundation, and boxing promoter Edgardo "Boy" Cantada seal an agreement recently at the NBC Tent on the dinner-boxing promotion "Live Match" featuring the OPBF mini-flyweight title fight between Rodel Mayol and Ernesto Rubillar. Looking on (from left) are Louie Albert Castillo of Circulan.Macroxam, Jolina de Guzman of Lufthansa Cargo, Springboard Foundation president Annette Helbig and members Sarah Mcleod and Roy Dallison.

Pacquiao protest set

From page A21.

of gathering all details before bringing the issue before the Nevada State Commission, the International Boxing Federation, and the World Boxing Association.

Murad cited as a grim example the delayed count allegedly tolled by referee Joe Cortez as Marquez stayed on the floor after suffering a third knockdown.

"We've found out that the referee counted 10 seconds within the 12 seconds that Marquez was trying to get up from the floor," Murad explained. "Not only that. Once Marquez was up and Manny began to come to him, the ref grabbed Pacquiao."

Murad said he started to climb the ring thinking Cortez was stopping the fight. To his amazement, Murad said Cortez allowed a continuation with practically no more time for Pacquiao to follow up.

Murad also claimed that at least a point should have been deducted after the ref had given Marquez a total of six warnings for low blows.

Murad called the ignorance of Clements criminal and at the same time revealed that the Canadian judge, Jutras, should've been made to reform after he had gotten embroiled in a well-publicized boxing controversy.

"We won the fight in the first round if not for the long count," Murad claimed. "We won it if the third judge knew how to score 10-6. We won it if they took a point for those low blows, after six warnings."

But what hurt most, Murad said, was that Manny Pacquiao felt he had let his country down.

"He didn't. He never did. He won it clear and his country should be very proud of him," Murad said.

Robbed of victory

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

IF you can't believe that, I'll be as disappointed as to see FPJ lose the presidential election to GMA via massive cheating.

I refer to Manny Pacquiao's fight with Juan Manuel Marquez on Sunday that ended in a 12-round draw in Las Vegas, allowing the 30-year-old Mexican to keep his IBF and WBA featherweight titles.

If you saw the fight on TV, I think I'll have a high batting average if I'll assume you picked Pacquiao the winner.

You need not be a Filipino, or a die-hard Pacquiao fan to say Pacquiao had won it.

It was clear as day that he won it, period.

Pacquiao was the clear winner because he landed the more decisive punches and virtually dominated the fight from start to finish.

I'm not saying, I will never say, there was highway robbery in the decision of the judges: One saw it 115-110 for Pacquiao, another saw it 115-110 for Marquez, and the third one returned a 113-113 verdict.

But it's not hard to discern their scores were immediately suspect, particularly the one that went to Marquez and the one that returned a 113-all tie.

Was boxing's dreaded mafia, the scourge of the past, at work again in this fight?

How can it be a draw when Pacquiao landed the more telling blows, not to mention the three knockdowns-he had inflicted on Marquez right in the first round? One judge even gave Pacquiao a 10-6 score in that round.

I am speechless.

But not wordless.

I was even very conservative, if not generous, as I only gave Pacquiao a 10-8 edge in Round 1 for those three knockdowns.

It might not matter now but I gave Pacquiao the fight, 118-111, awarding Marquez just two rounds: the 6th and 11th.

I don't know. Maybe I was biased? Maybe I thought Marquez didn't have a chance from the very start?

Filipino sportswriters tend to be partisan in their reportage of a fight involving a fellow Filipino.

But, modesty aside, not me. I'd always stick my neck out if I believed in something, whether my decision would involve a Filipino's career/future or not.

It was as clear as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west: I saw Pacquiao to be the dominant boxer from start to finish.

His punches were crispier.

He landed more decisive hits.

He was on the attack for the most part of the fight.

Never did we see Pacquiao hesitate one teeny-weeny bit as he was always on the blitz mode, never backpedaling even just for once.

After Pacquiao had knocked down Marquez three times with thundering lefts in the first round, he was always on the move-looking for that one big punch that never came.

Oh, yes, he also received the best shots from Marquez, but he withstood them all like a rock embedded atop a hill-standing his ground against a vicious, summer storm. When the final bell ending the 12-round fight rang, there was no doubt he won it. The sell-out crowd of 10,000 at the MGM Grand Hotel let out a collective groan of frustration when the draw verdict was announced; they knew Pacquiao was robbed of victory.

Before the fight's outcome was announced, Boni Sison, who was seated beside me watching the fight on TV in the company of NLRC's Wally Estrada and noted civil engineer Julius Apostol, among others, said: "A text-message here says the fight is a 'lumber' and you know what 'lumber' means? Tabla. Draw."

Stung, I answered: "If Pacquiao loses this fight, I will quit writing a column."

The draw verdict was enough to unnerve me. It hasn't yet sunk into my system. Those three knockdowns scored by Pacquiao were a testament to his mastery of Marquez, who never really delivered one telling blow—or a series of serious blows, either—that could have swayed me to give the fight to him.

To be sure, it wasn't a dull fight. Both fighters had dished out their best—but with Pacquiao landing the more creative shots, though.

I am saying this because I am a Filipino?

Excuse me, but how explain the fact Marquez earned a draw when he hadn't really seriously threatened to knock Pacquiao out, let alone put the Filipino on the verge of serious trouble at any point of the 60-minute bout?

Darn.

Anyway, with the fight ending in draw, I'd still be around writing a column. I don't know if that's a bane or boon to you out there, dolls and guys. The draw verdict had also made me keep my word: Vote for FPJ should Pacquiao fail to knock Marquez out before Round 7.

Gladly, I'd accepted both. My luck-even as my heart still bleeds till now over the raw deal the 25-year-old Pacquiao had gotten from the two judges who had mysteriously given the fight to Marquez.

The 115-110 scorecard in favor of Marquez was a bizarre enough decision that could forever haunt that judge's conscience the rest of his life.

But the 113-tie that sealed the draw and thus allowed Marquez to escape defeat?

That was bull.

Every boxing buff knows that a judge that issues a draw verdict is automatically handing the fight to the reigning world champion.

As the late National Artist Nick Joaquin said, "*Pektus, pare.*"

***

FASTBREAK. My gratitude to Julian Apostol and his wife, the hard-working teacher Lorna, for allowing me to do this column in his home in Bogtong Silang, Mangatarem, Pangasinan, and then having it e-mailed to the Inquirer through their telephone. Julian is the no-nonsense Comelec election officer of my hometown Mangatarem, where I cast my vote yesterday...Late is never late and so, Mat Defensor needs to be congratulated for standing his ground against the black propaganda being peddled against him by his opponent. Mat, the national chess president, ran for representative in the third district of Quezon City and, as per early electoral returns would show, is almost a cinch to win it.

JENNY 16TH

Perfect Pak makes it 22

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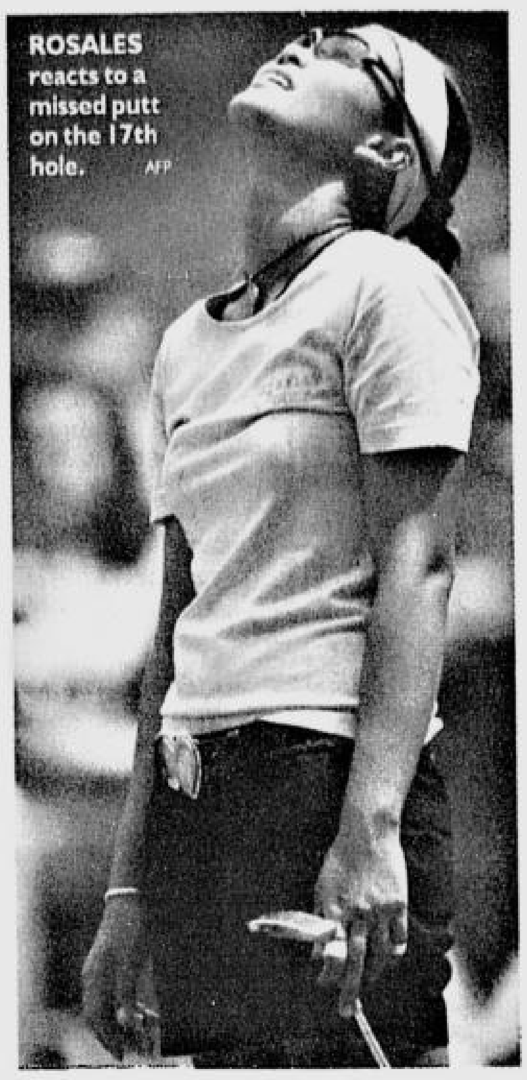
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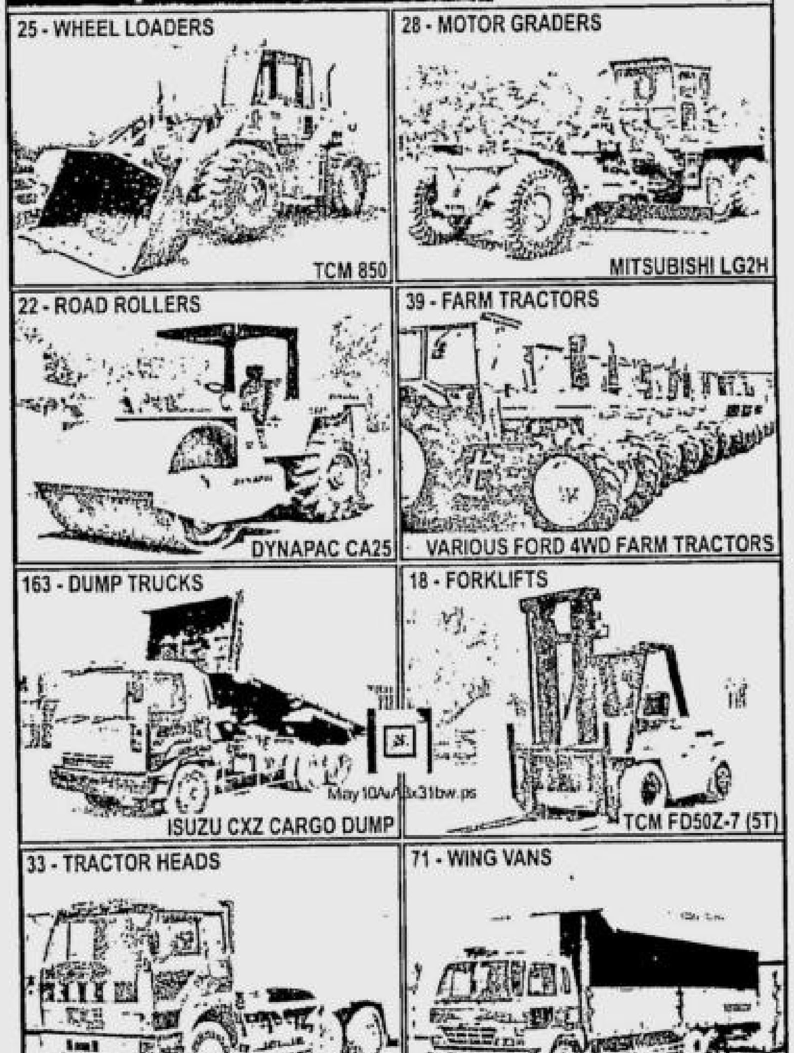

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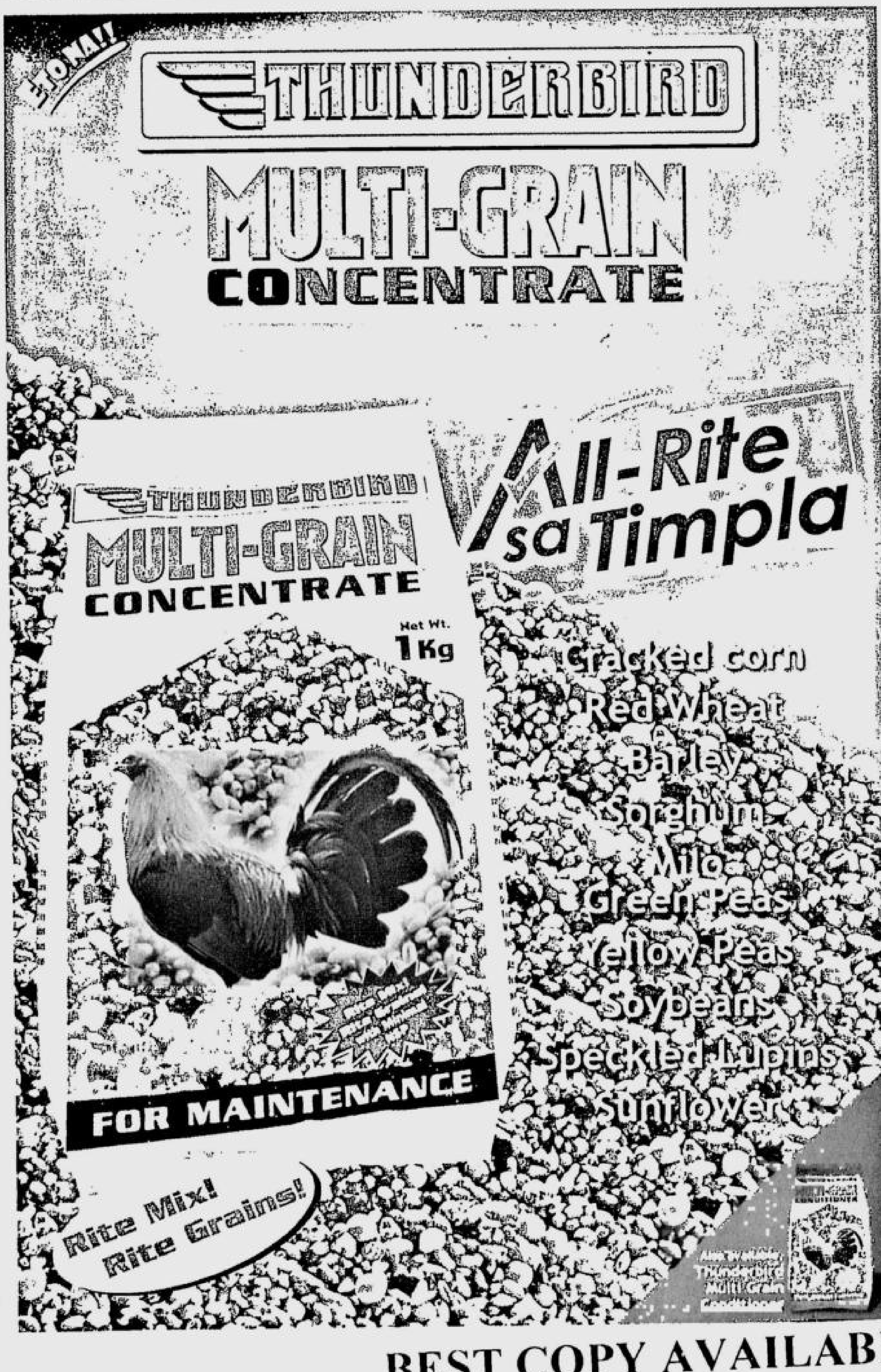

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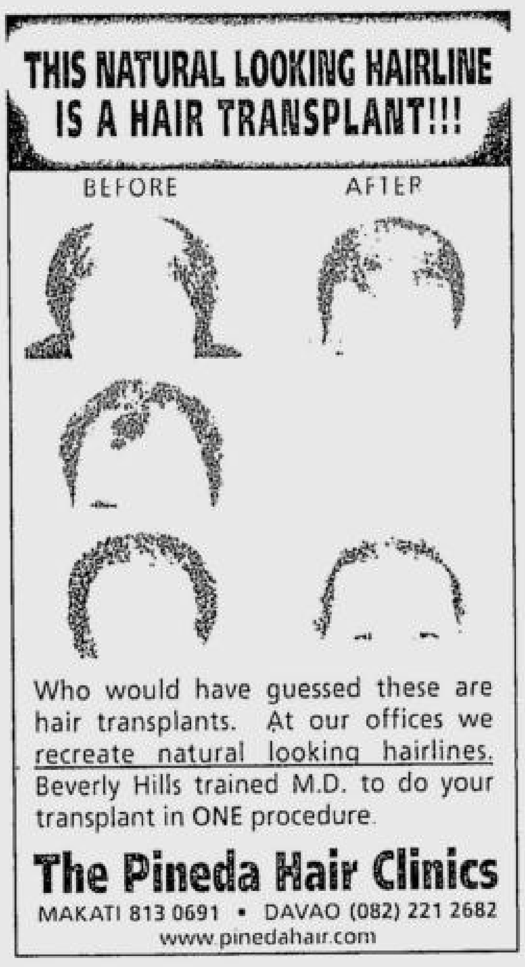
Race 7—1 Sultanan Lia 2 Magic Dancer 3 Kunichiwa 4 Classic Model

Race 8—1 Ammin 2 Expediter 3 College Gem 4 Queen of Gaia 5 [illegible]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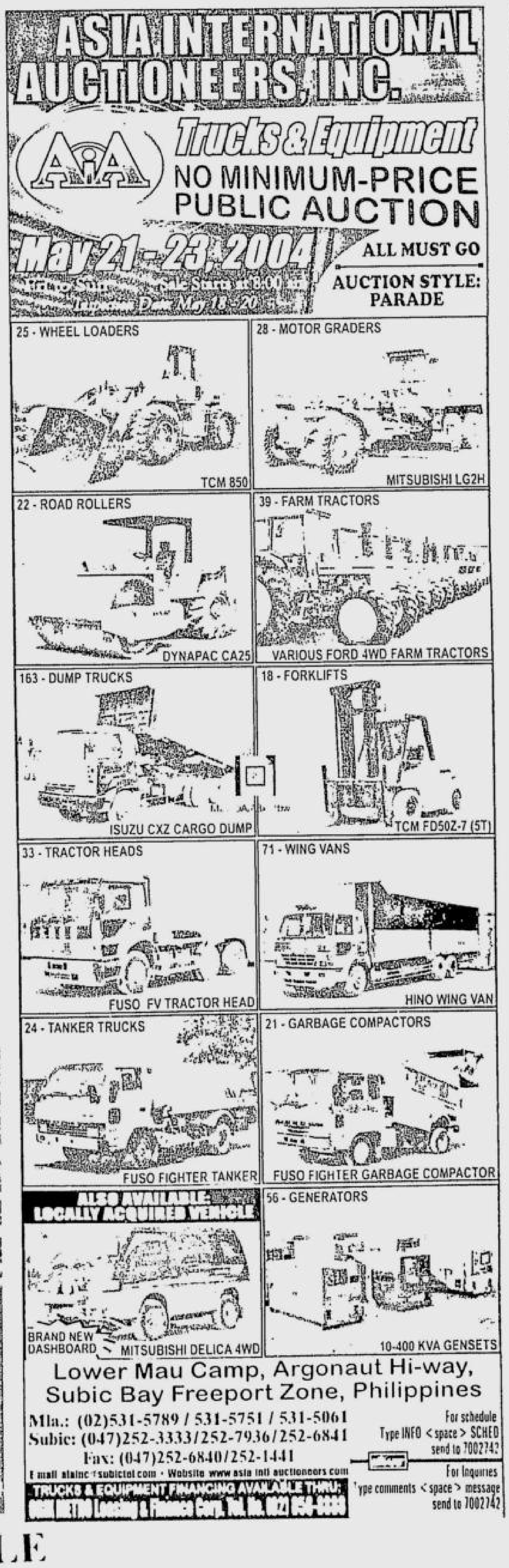
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12	VAN HELSING

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4	MAN ON FIRE

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10	HAUNTED SPIRIT

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4	VAN HELSING

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2	SCHOOL OF ROCK
3	VAN HELSING
4	I WILL SURVIVE
5	VAN HELSING
6	I WILL SURVIVE
7	HAUNTED SPIRIT
8	HELLBOY

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3	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
4	I WILL SURVIVE

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8	HELLBOY

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8	TAKING LIVES

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5	VAN HELSING
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2	PETER PAN
3	THE CURSE
4	HELL BOY

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1
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5:30/ 8:15/10:30
LFS/11:00 LMF/1:15 END

2
STARSKY & HUTCH
11:10 FS/11:35 MF/
1:50/ 4:05/ 6:20/8:35/
10:20 LFS/ 10:50 LMF/
12:35 END

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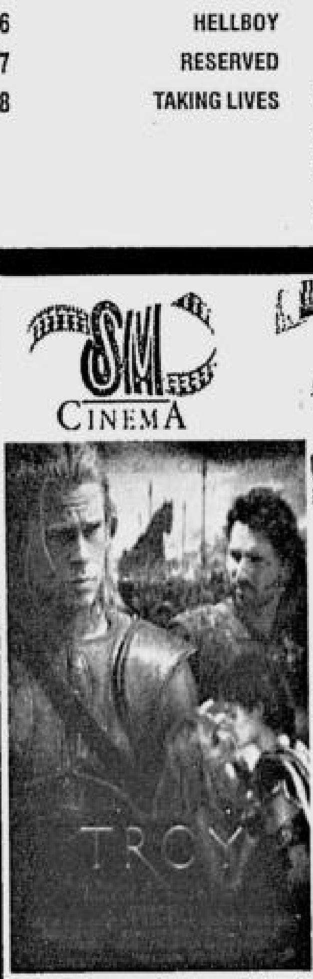

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Don't miss the chance to see the scenes from the movie TROY in a photo exhibit to be held at the SM Megamall Cinema lobby starting May 2.

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Truly impressive and felt performance

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WHEN **Antonio Banderas** first became an international film star with "Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down" and "The Mambo Kings," he was all hunk, little dramatic depth. Banderas gained more adherents when he played **Che Guevarra** in the film version of the musical, "Evita."

Later, however, he got involved in fantasy fluff like the "Spy Kids" flicks, playing the kids' *dad*, of all roles! So, his stock went down again.

Well, all those ups and downs have effectively become academic, because in his latest film, **Christopher Hampton's** "Imagining Argentina," Banderás proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that he's no pushover in the acting department.

In fact, in Hampton's film, Banderas turns in a truly impressive and felt performance as the husband of a journalist (**Emma Thompson**) who is abducted by government agents in Argentina in the '80s.

Banderas' character looks everywhere for his wife. He is so driven that he develops paranormal powers that enable him to "see" what's happening, not only to his vanished wife, but to other political *desaparecidos* as well.

The relatives of other victims of the military government are happy that Banderas is able to help them, but Banderas' psychic gift is a terrible burden to him.

Every time he sees the desaparecidos being tortured by sadistic prison officials and guards, he dies a little. But, seemingly against all odds, he persists in his mission to get justice for all desaparecidos, and liberty for his wife.

The torture scenes in Hampton's film are so realistic that viewers end up feeling as frustrated and emotionally spent as Banderas' character.

The situation becomes even more desperate when Banderas' teenage daughter is also abducted, and the theater he runs is padlocked.

It's an inspiring testament to the indomitability of the human spirit that, despite all of the traumatic assaults on his family, Banderas still refuses to turn vindictive and violent.

Happily for everyone (including the acutely involved audience), the movie's plot has an upbeat ending.

"Imagining Argentina" is Banderas' most significant starrer. It subjects him to demanding sequences that test his mettle as an actor to an extreme degree, and he measures up to the challenges by coming up with his most compelling performance.

So sorry to fans of Banderas the hunk, however, because the actor isn't concerned about looking good here. In fact, it's the least of his concerns, as he focuses instead on his character's crushing pain and psychic torment.

Hunky looks? Easy come, easy go. Thespic talent? Banderas proves that he's got loads of that, so he's in the acting biz to stay.

Feedback

FROM **Emmanuel Santos Espino** of Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija: "I like ABS-CBN's new station ID, 'Sabay Summer Tayo, Kapamilya.' It is a good showcase of the network's stars, traditional games we love to play, and good values.

"Today's youth is addicted to computers and cellular phones. I hope the new ID reminds us of our old games that help develop children's interpersonal skills. Thanks to ABS-CBN for the beautiful reminder."

'Living with Tigers'

AT 9 P.M. on May 16, Discovery Channel screens "Living with Tigers."

For four years now, the channel has been following an extraordinary experiment to take captive-born tigers and teach them to be wild—not in their native Asia, but in Africa. This two-hour documentary traces two tiger siblings' journey from cuddly cubs to efficient predators, in an adventure that

TRULY/ A26

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4 GOLD (DTS)	MAN OF FIRE
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	WHOLE TEN YARDS
6 GOLD (SDDS)	STARSKY & HUTCH
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	VAN HELSING
8	I WILL SURVIVE
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10	BIG FISH

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3	ANIMAL

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2	RESERVE
3	I WILL SURVIVE
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5	VAN HELSING

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4	I WILL SURVIVE
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6	HAUNTED SPIRIT

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2	PASSION OF THE CHRIST

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2	MY GOOD LAWYERS WIFE
3	
4	

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6	
7 (DTS)	
8 (SDDS)	
9 (DOLBY)	

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3	MAN OF FIRE
4 (SDDS)	STARSKY & HUTCH
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6 (DOLBY)	VAN HELSING
7 (DTS)	VAN HELSING
8	RESERVE
9	RESERVE

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2 (SDDS)	
3 (DTS)	
4 (DOLBY)	
5	

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5	ANIMAL

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7	HELLBOY

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3 (DOLBY)	MAN OF FIRE
4	BONE SNATCHERS

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1	PETER PAN
2	TAKING LIVES
3 (DOLBY)	BUTTERFLY EFFECTS
4	PASSION OF THE CHRIST

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2	SCHOOL OF ROCK
3 (DTS)	HELLBOY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
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2 (DTS)	HELLBOY
3 (DOLBY)	SCHOOL OF ROCK
4	WHOLE 10 YARD

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3 (DTS)	SCHOOL OF ROCK
4	WHOLE 10 YARD

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2	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
3 (DOLBY)	TAKING LIVES

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4 (DTS)	TAKING LIVES

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3	MAN OF FIRE

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2	I WILL SURVIVE
3	HOUSE OF THE DEAD

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2	TAKING LIVES
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4 (DOLBY)	PAY CHECK

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1 (DTS)	RESERVE

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2	WHOLE 10 YARD
3	MAN OF FIRE
4	STARSKY & HUTCH

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Rico Yan story without Claudine

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

RICO Yan's life story will be shown on GMA 7's "Magpakailanman" soon.

I wonder why Rico's home studio ABS-CBN 2 didn't think of getting the rights to Rico's biography. Perhaps the network's overkill coverage during Rico's wake and interment was more than enough already.

The matinee idol's life may have been cut short but it's nonetheless interesting. I heard that there might be no part about the **Claudine Barretto** chapter in Rico's life. But any true-blue Rico fan will agree that their idol's life story will not be complete without touching on the Claudine part at all.

Still on Claudine. Is it true that she got quite peeved when a feature on "The Buzz" on her ex-lover **Mark Anthony Fernandez** (who's undergoing rehab again) insinuated that one of the reasons why Mark can't seem to give up drugs is that he has not completely gotten over Claudine yet?

Theirs was such a tumultuous romance but it's unfair to blame Claudine for Mark's continued drug dependence. If Claudine was able to move on, so can Mark. The question is, does he want to? Or is it a case of learned helplessness?

> The late idol's life story will not be complete without touching on Barretto

TJ's decision

MY HEART goes out to my co-host on "Celebrity Dat Com," **TJ Manotoc**. Some quarters are accusing him of being an *ingrato* to GMA-7 because of his decision to move to ABS-CBN. Nothing is concrete yet, but TJ promised me he would let me know as soon as he is ready to make a formal announcement. As of now, he is no longer with "Unang Hirit" and "24 Oras."

If and when he signs up with ABS-CBN, he will most likely join "Magandang Umaga Bayan," the rival show of "Unang Hirit," which he co-hosted on GMA. It does not mean, however, that TJ does not value what he has learned in "Unang Hirit." There just comes a time in every host's career when he feels it's time to explore new horizons. TJ has found his niche in the morning slot so you can't blame him if he opts to stick to that, but this time with a different twist.

More exciting 'Click'

THE STORY and adventures of youth continue in the most sought-after *barkada* on Philippine TV—GMA 7's "Click," the longest-running youth show in the country. "Click" continues to tell the budding romance between Yas (**Valerie Concepcion**) and Benj (**JC de Vera**) as well as the thrilling courtship between Syd (**Iya Villania**) and Gilbert (**Drew Arellano**).

And now, the highly popular Starstruck Final 4—**Mark Herras, Jennylyn Mercado, Rainier Castillo** and **Yasmien Kurdi**—join the group along with newcomers **Warren Austria** and **Bianca King**. "'Click' offers even more exciting episodes with the introduction of fresh faces," says "Click" director **Mac Alejandre**. "The characters are more defined and

RICO/ A26

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2	VAN HELSING	11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00 PG-13
3	THE CONFESSIONS OF TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN	11:35, 1:50, 4:05, 6:20 8:35, 10:50 GP
4	I WILL SURVIVE	12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 10:00 PG-13

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VAN HELSING PG13 11:25, 2:00, 4:35, 7:10, 9:45	MAN ON FIRE R18 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00	VAN HELSING PG13 12:10, 2:45, 5:20, 7:55, 10:30

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MAY 20	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
MAY 23	PBA : SAN MIGUEL VS. FEDEX
MAY 26	PBA : STA LUCIA VS. SHELL
MAY 29	THE SEARCHERS
MAY 30	PBA : RED BULL VS. SAN MIGUEL
JUNE 1	NCA 7-COCK DERBY

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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

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ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	U-BELT / VENUS
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	LINGGO LANG ANG PAHINGA
B	CLOSED
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
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STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
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CINEMA-2	ANIMAL
CINEMA-3	WHOLE 10 YARDS
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DUDA
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MAN ON FIRE
CINEMA-6	MASIKIP SA DIBDIB
CINEMA-7	SEX EDUCATION
CINEMA-8	TAKING LIVES
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	VAN HELSING
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	VAN HELSING
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	CONFESSIONS OF DRAMA QUEEN
CINEMA-12	STARSKY & HUTCH
CINEMA-14	HELLBOY
CINEMA-15	I WILL SURVIVE

LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PIÑAS)	PAYCHECK
CINEMA-1	ANIMAL
CINEMA-2	TAKING LIVES
CINEMA-4	PASSION OF THE CHRIST

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
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2	I WILL SURVIVE	10 35, 12 50, 3 05, 5 20, 7 35, 9 50
3	HELLBOY	10 45, 1 30, 4 15, 7 00, 9.45
4	CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN	10 25, 12 40, 2 55, 5 10, 7 25, 9 40
5	VAN HELSING	10 20, 1 15, 4 10, 7 05, 10 00
6	STARSKY AND HUTCH	10 35, 12 50, 3 05, 5 20, 7 35, 9.50
7	PAYCHECK	11.35, 1 50, 4 05, 6 20, 8 35, 10 30
8	SCHOOL OF ROCK	11 50, 2 00, 4 10, 6 20, 8 30, 10 30
9	THE WHOLE TEN YARDS	10 35, 12 50, 3 05, 5 20, 7 35, 9 50
10	MAN ON FIRE	10 15, 1 10, 4 05, 7.00, 9 55

MATINEE: Monday to Friday/ 10 am-4pm except holidays
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ERMITA 526-7185 / 536-7809 to 12

Cinema	Movie	Schedule
1	VAN HELSING	10:30, 1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50
2	HELLBOY	10 20, 12 40, 3 00, 5 20, 7 40, 10 00
3	SCHOOL OF ROCK	10 50, 1 00, 3 10, 5 20, 7 30, 9 40
4	STARSKY AND HUTCH	10 50, 1 00, 3 10, 5 20, 7 30, 9 40
5	CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN	11 15, 1.05, 2.55, 4 45, 6 35, 8 25, 10.00
6	MAN ON FIRE	10 40, 1 25, 4 10, 6 55, 9 43
7	I WILL SURVIVE	10 10, 12 25, 2 40, 4 55, 7 10, 9.40

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Cinema	Movie	Schedule
1	CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN	10.50, 12 50, 2 50, 4 50, 6 50, 9 00
2	VAN HELSING	12 50, 4 10, 7 30, 11 30
3	VAN HELSING	12.50, 4.10, 7.30, 11:30
4	MAN ON FIRE	10.30, 1 40, 4 00, 6.25, 9.00
5	HELLBOY	11 20, 1 40, 4 00, 6 25, 9 00
6	STARSKY AND HUTCH	10 50, 12 50, 2 50, 4 50, 6 50, 9 00
7	SCHOOL OF ROCK	11 00, 1 00, 3 00, 5 00, 7 00, 9 00
8	I WILL SURVIVE	12 30, 3 00, [illegible]

Big R Supercenter NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW 935-3229 / 31

Cinema	Movie	Schedule
1	VAN HELSING	12 15, 3 05, 5 55, 8 45, 11 15
2	CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN	12.00, 2.00, 4.00, 6.00, 8 10
3	MAN ON FIRE	12 00, 2 40, 5 20, 8 10
4	STARSKY AND HUTCH	11 30, 1 45, 4 00, 6 15, 8 30
5	SCHOOL OF ROCK	12 00, 2 00, 4 00, 6 00, 8 10
6	HELLBOY	11.45, 1 55, 4 05, 6 15, 8 30
7	I WILL SURVIVE	11 45, 1 55, 4 05, 6 15, 8 30
8	HAUNTED SPIRIT	12 00, 2 00, 4 00, 6 00, 8 10

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4 THE WHOLE TEN YARDS
5 HELLBOY

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5 HELLBOY

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4 SORUM
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6 I WILL SURVIVE

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4 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
5 PAYCHECK
6 THE UNINVITED

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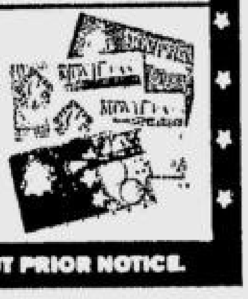

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Black Eyed Peas at CCP grounds

THE NEWEST radio station to hit the airwaves, Blazin' 105.9 FM, brings to Manila one of today's hottest R&B acts, the Black Eyed Peas, for a concert on May 29 at the CCP Open Grounds.

Called "Island Flava," the concert signals the launch of Blazin' 105.9.

Black Eyed Peas is behind the hits "Where is the Love?," "Shut Up" and "Hey Mama." The group, which debuted in 1998, is composed of Apl.De.Ap, a Filipino from Angeles City; Will.I.Am, an African American; Taboo, a Mexican American; and the newest member, the blond Fergie of Los Angeles.

Their first album, "Behind the Front," spawned the hip-hop hit "Joints and Jams." Two years later, they released "Request Line."

In June 2003, the Black Eyed Peas, released "Where is the Love?" on which the group collaborated with pop superstar Justin Timberlake. The song shot straight to No.1 in the pop charts. Other hit singles from their "Elephunk" album, certified platinum in many countries, followed such as "Shut Up" and "Hey Mama."

The Black Eyed Peas was nominated in the 2003 American Music Awards for favorite rap/hip hop band/duo/group. This year, it bagged two Grammy nominations for record of the year and best rap/song collaboration for "Where is the Love?"

The May 29 CCP party kicks off at 4 p.m. with what could be the biggest front act of the year. It features Rocky Rock, a Filipino turntable artist from Los Angeles who has performed for celebrities like J. Lo, Ms Thang from Canada, Sun Valley Crew, 7 Shots of Wisdom, Reggae Mistress, Butta Flava, Pikaso, and DJs Glenn, Paul, Darrel Doughnut and Badboy Jeff.

At 8:30 p.m., it will be the turn of the Black Eyed Peas.

"We're music lovers," front man Will.I.Am said of their category-defying sound in a recent interview. "Me personally, I love everything, from bossa nova to reggae to rock to classical."

Another characteristic of the Black Eyed Peas that makes them such a hit among music aficionados is that they have also chosen to sing and rap about issues normally not discussed in pop songs. They speak their minds on political and social issues.

Like the music of the Black Eyed Peas, the programming of Blazin' 105.9 is an eclectic mix of different pop genres, from pop and R&B, to hip hop, rock, europop and many more. It also boasts of a talented roster of DJs who know the pulse of coolness like the back of their hand.

Blazin' 105.9 has a state-of-the-art all-solid state studio, transmitter and equipment.

"Island Flava" is also presented with the support of Globe, Nestlé, Unilever, Culture Club, ABS-CBN, Myx, Manila Bulletin, The Westin Philippine Plaza and Sketchers.

Tickets are available at National Bookstore branches or Ticketworld (891-9999).

MUSIC lovers Fergie, Apl.De.Ap, Taboo and Will.I.Am of the Black Eyed Peas

SHOW TIME

Truly impressive and felt...

From page A24

has taken them from the US to Canada, and finally to South Africa.

Ybanag Artists Circle

THE MANILA Chapter of the Ybanag Artists Circle will be organized at 9 a.m. on May 15 at Park 'n Fly Conference Room, Ninoy Aquino Avenue, Pasay City. Call Dante Argañoza at 0927-5511700.

The Ybanag Artists Circle was recently organized in Tuguegarao City. Its officers are **Leopoldo Caronan**, president; **Remedios Singson**, vice president; Dr. **Rosario Lasam**, secretary; **Bles Unite**, treasurer, and **Jun Baylon**, auditor.

Celso P. Templo is the honorary chair, and Gov. **Edgar Lara** is the vice chair.

'You Got Served'

THE NEW Columbia Pictures film, "You Got Served," is a new fable for the hip-hop age, where the best street dancers pit their moves and their passion for a chance to make their dreams come true. **Marques Houston** of IMX and Omari "Omarion" Grandbersst of B2K play the lead roles.

Rico Yan story without Claudine

From page A25

viewers get to follow their development over a longer period of time."

"Click" airs every Saturday at 5 p.m. on GMA

Reader writes

DEAR Ms Carvajal,

As an avid viewer of "MTB" on TFC (The Filipino Channel), I hope that what you reported about ABS-CBN not being happy with **Arnel Ignacio** is not true. I believe that many viewers are happy with Mr. Ignacio's performance. Arnel has been very professional since the start of the new MTB. He has always been there and the viewers can see that he is doing his best to perk up the show.

Two Saturdays ago, MTB reformatted some of its portions to make them more *kuwela*. Arnel Ignacio used to have a very, very funny portion on MTB (pre-jackpot round of Spin a Million) but for some reason it was removed. Many of my friends watch MTB because of that portion, and then *iyon pa ang nawala*. So maybe it's the writers or production people who are to blame if the good hosts like Arnel are not clicking. Arnel had a very good portion, and then they removed it. Where is the logic there?

Another kuwela portion that was removed is the Bida-Oke portion in the studio (they still have it but now they only do it outside the studio). It has become kuwela because of the antics of Baby Bunot. Many viewers sorely miss her.—*Robert Panelo, TFC subscriber, Chicago Illinois, USA*

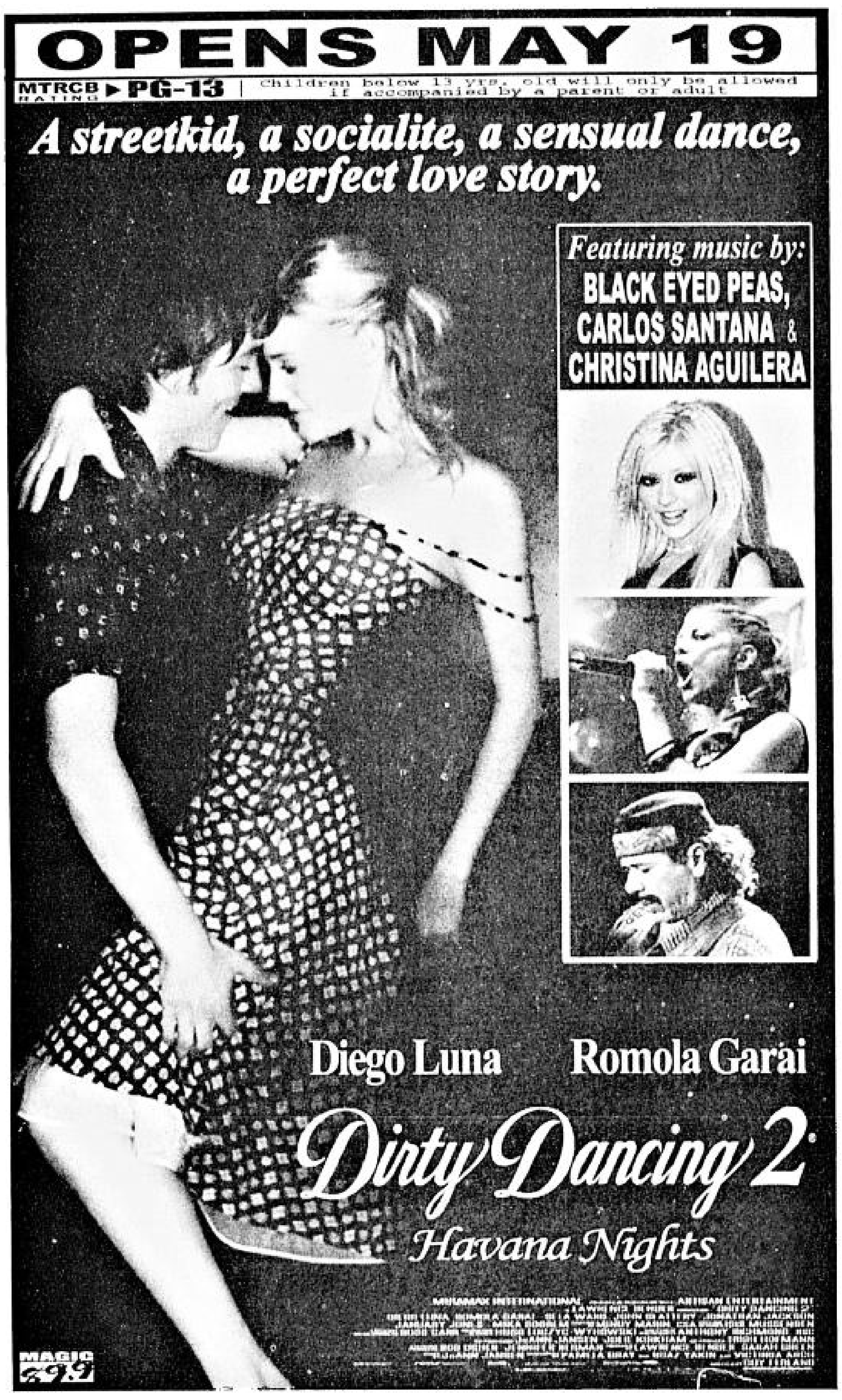
French leave

I WILL be taking a one-week leave. I'm off to Paris.

I am ecstatic to recapture my student days in the City of Lights. I hope I will get a chance to interview **Billy Joe Crawford**, (who's making waves in Paris and **KC Concepcion**.

Merci beaucoup to **Martin Macalintal** and **Jose Fontainhas** of the French Embassy for the last minute French tips. **Joey Ampeso** of the Department of Foreign Affairs and my all-around amigo **Sergio Naguiat** for the kind assistance at such short notice.

For feedback, e-mail friends_elpueblo@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com



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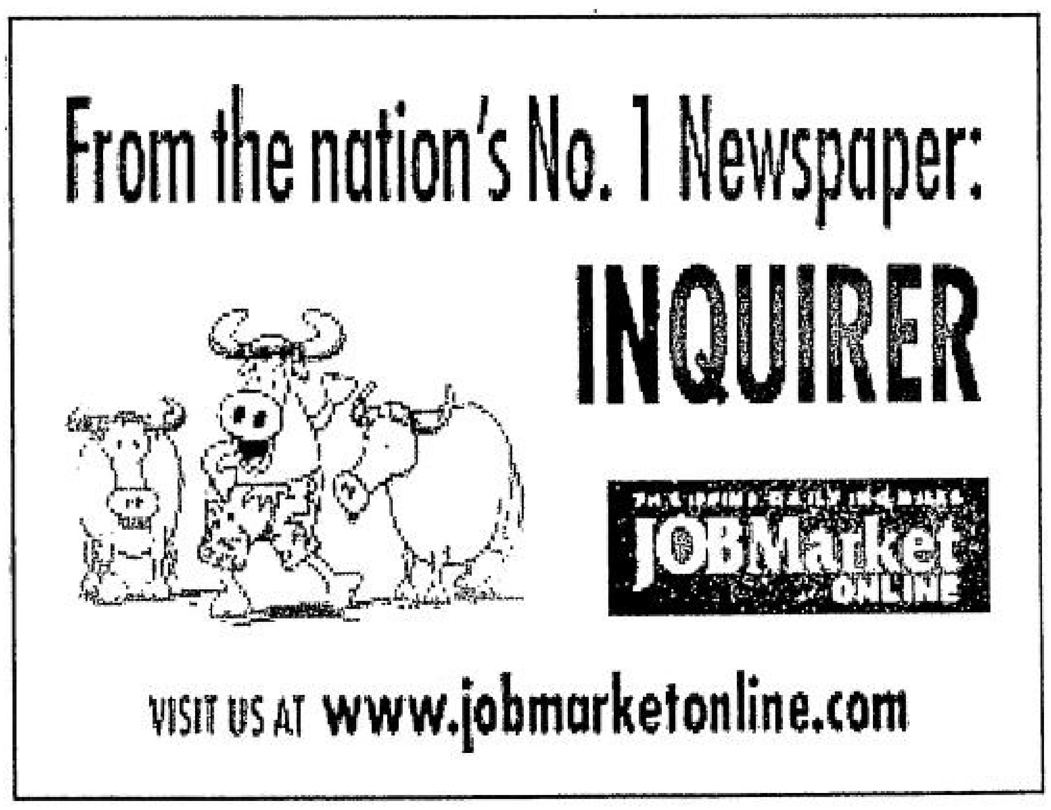
Dirty Dancing 2
Havana Nights



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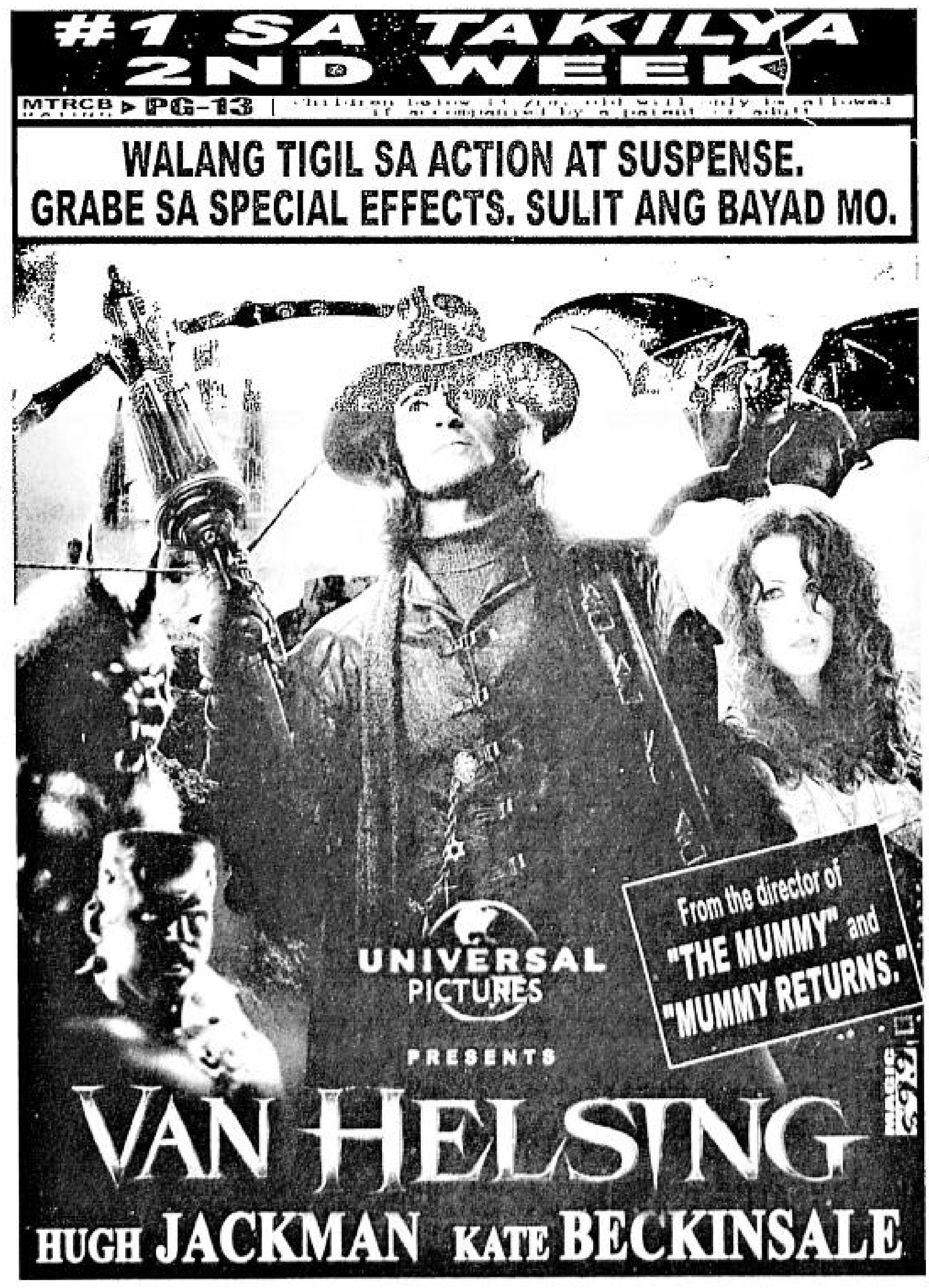

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From the director of "THE MUMMY" and "MUMMY RETURNS."
UNIVERSAL PICTURES PRESENTS
VAN HELSING
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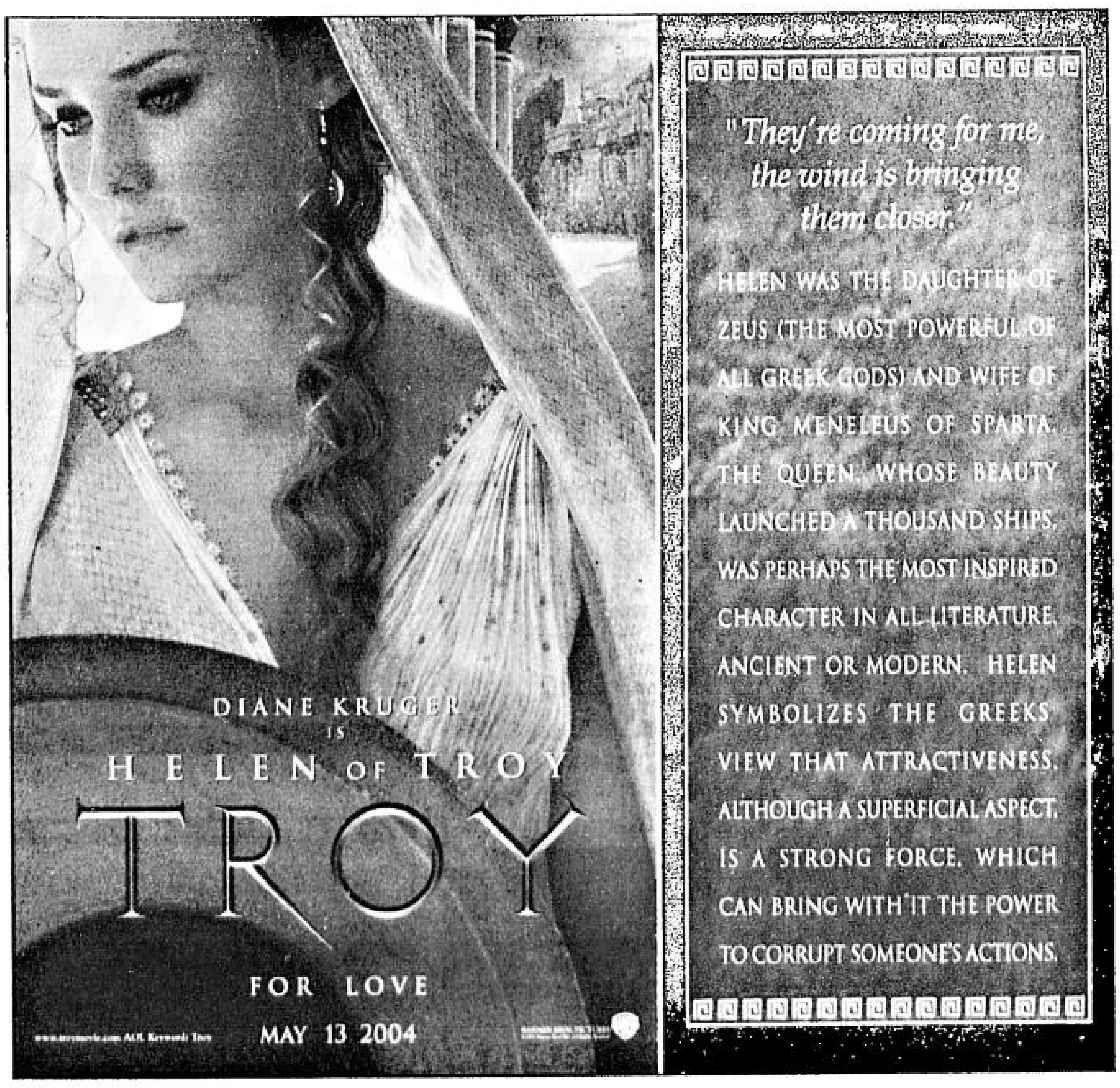


DIANE KRUGER IS HELEN OF TROY
TROY
FOR LOVE
MAY 13 2004
"They're coming for me, the wind is bringing them closer."
HELEN WAS THE DAUGHTER OF ZEUS (THE MOST POWERFUL OF ALL GREEK GODS) AND WIFE OF KING MENELEUS OF SPARTA. THE QUEEN, WHOSE BEAUTY LAUNCHED A THOUSAND SHIPS, WAS PERHAPS THE MOST INSPIRED CHARACTER IN ALL LITERATURE, ANCIENT OR MODERN. HELEN SYMBOLIZES THE GREEKS' VIEW THAT ATTRACTIVENESS, ALTHOUGH A SUPERFICIAL ASPECT, IS A STRONG FORCE, WHICH CAN BRING WITH IT THE POWER TO CORRUPT SOMEONE'S ACTIONS.

'TROY'

More Hollywood than Homer

By Ruel S. de Vera

REVIEW

HARDCORE Homer fans, don't get your togas in a Gordian knot just yet. Yes, Wolfgang Petersen's "Troy" deviates wildly from "The Iliad" about 10 minutes into the movie, but there is more to this muscle-bound summer colossus than just action scenes and hunks.

It is, after all, the tale of how the Greeks laid siege to the walled city of Troy. "Troy" involves the forces mustered by the ruthless Greek King Agamemnon (Brian Cox of "X2") going up against the Trojans, led by the venerable King Priam (screen legend Peter O'Toole). But it also features Brad Pitt as Achilles, Orlando Bloom as Paris and Eric Bana as Hector, a lineup that immediately identifies this movie's target audience.

Screenwriter David Benioff conspires with Petersen to produce a reinvented and Cliff Notes-sized version of Homer's sprawling epic. This is the Trojan War for a generation suffering from attention deficit disorder. In a way, it is a reverse version of Baz Luhrmann's "Romeo + Juliet." Here, the raiment and armament are ancient but the dialogue is modern. Think of it as a rap number, "Trojan War (Wolfgang Petersen Dub)" by David Benioff featuring Homer.

As anyone who's taken up Greek mythology knows, the Trojan War is ignited when Paris, prince of Troy, spirits away Helen (newcomer Diane Kruger), the wife of King Menelaus (Brendan Gleeson from "Braveheart"). Menelaus asks Agamemnon for help and a fleet of a thousand Greek ships sets sail even while Troy fortifies its walls and shores. From there on in, "Troy" starts moving away from the classic Greek story and into summer action movie territory. Devious politics turns to war and arcade-style throwdowns between ancient action figures.

Perhaps most surprising is the skill shown by Pitt, here almost literally the golden boy of the show as he transforms himself into Achilles. His is a one-note performance, but what a fierce one-note performance it is as his Achilles is a warrior who knows nothing but war—but knows it all too well. This is a show of force by Brad Pitt as pure action hero.

Wrestlers and legends

The large cast features everyone from pro wrestlers to stage legends. Sean Bean (Boromir from "The Lord of the Rings") gives a textured performance as the crafty Odysseus and Cox imbues his Agamemnon with such a hatefully effective megalomania, the Greek king becomes the movie's single identifiable villain.

Because when you get down to the leather sandals, "Troy" is about how wars have no easy villains or heroes. And for more of that ambivalence, "Troy" turns to the mighty turns by O'Toole as the righteous yet prideful Priam and Bana as the doggedly dedicated Hector.

Stoic heroism

O'Toole, even with the flimsiest of roles, can turn a movie on its head by himself and he defines Priam by his love for his sons and his flawed belief in Troy's invincibility. Bana is the movie's true dramatic center, essaying with sensitivity and strength the role of Priam's oldest son and Troy's favorite son. In scenes that range from his face-off with Pitt's Achilles to his heartbreaking farewells to Andromache (Saffron Burrows), Bana is clearly channeling more of his stoic heroism from "Black Hawk Down" than the CGI hysterics of "The Incredible Hulk."

Though there are several crucial love stories running through "Troy," the rattle and hum of battle fills most of this movie's nearly three hours—or at least it feels like it. Strangely enough, Kruger doesn't really have much to do in "Troy" except try not to be upset by the fact that Bloom is actually prettier that she is. Burrows and Rose Byrne's Briseis fare better, but not by much. This "Troy" belongs to the men.

Irresistible combo

Petersen approaches "Troy" with self-assurance and restraint but "Troy" is still more "Air Force One" than it is "Das Boot." That being said, there is a video-game quality to it, a Gen Y electricity amid the simplified mythology, with Petersen handling the controller. Petersen has ample reinforcements with the talented eye of cinematographer Roger Pratt ("Brazil"), who provides a sweeping, violent and yet arresting landscape by zooming in instead of zooming out, focusing on the individual battles instead of the widescreen slaughter.

What "Troy" is, at the final reckoning, is an irresistible combo of the computer game "Age of Empires" and of the TV show "WWE Smackdown," legends by way of online gaming, the new Grecian formula. Guardians of the classics may want to remind their students of how the actual "Illiad" goes; this movie may not be accurate but it will be impossible to resist. Instead, it is Homer by way of Hollywood, a summer movie armada packing serious popcorn power instead of the original's pedigree.

"Troy" may not have reached the kind of immortality that Achilles and company sought, but today's audiences will not be diminished by an anointing by classical Greek mythos, as remixed as that version may be.

Warner Bros.' "Troy" opens in Metro Manila theaters on May 13.

MYTHOLOGY SIMPLIFIED. There is more to this muscle-bound summer colossus than just action scenes and hunks that include Pitt (left), Bloom (below right) and Bana, who is actually the movie's true dramatic center as Troy's favorite son.

Jasmine Trias in 'AI' all-girl fight

From page A0

"It put more pressure on us. It gave us an extra challenge since we not only need to study for three hours every day, we also have to perform and give our best on national television."

Pressed to explain the rumors that security measures (more bodyguards, etc.) for the finalists had doubled and that there were threats to his life, Stevens explained, "There is no truth to that. It was just a bad joke made by an LA DJ that was taken out of context and was blown out of proportion. I think what upset me more was seeing my mom affected by the bad joke. I just didn't like the repercussions of the joke."

Stevens declined to reveal the exact nature of the joke as mentioned by the DJ.

Concert tour

We also learned that the autograph signing by the finalists after the show has been shortened. The windows of "AI" vehicles have been tinted. Interviews with family members and friends of the contestants have also been limited.

However, the top six finalists landed on the cover of the May 7 issue of "Entertainment Weekly." A reporter was allowed to follow the contestants around for a week to give a peek into their lives as they juggle their hectic schedule, from their sessions with the vocal coach, meetings with stylists, rehearsals with choreographers and encounters with the judges.

The 12 finalists of this season's "American Idol," including Camile Velasco, will be reunited in a 52-city concert tour all over the US in July.

This early, there are already reports that "American Idol 4" will have Bob Dylan and ex-Beatle Paul McCartney as guest judges. That's how popular "American Idol" has become.

BOTTOMS UP. First told that she was in the bottom two, Trias is later described as in a "safe" position

Makati holds music festival

AS PART of its 334th Foundation Day celebrations, Makati City stages the Makati Music Festival on May 7, 14, 21 and 31.

The city government, led by Mayor Jejomar C. Binay, and the Makati Festivals Foundation Inc. bring to the music fest such musical stars as ethnic-rock genius Joey Ayala, singer Cookie Chua of Color It Red, jazz artist Tots Tolentino, and the NYMC Symphony Band.

The performances are open to the public:

San Miguel Beer Street Party on Kalayaan Avenue, May 14, starting at 6 p.m.

Makati Jazz Festival, Rockwell Center, May 21, 7 p.m. The show will feature Affinity with Mishka Adams of Blue Echoes as guest vocalist, and Tots Tolentino's Buhay, with Cookie Chua as guest vocalist.

Joey Ayala, Amphitheater, Makati Park and Garden, May 22, 6 p.m.

"Pag-ibig, Pag-ibig at Pag-ibig Pa Rin" (A Concert of Love), Guadalupe Ruins, Barangay Guadalupe Viejo, May 31.

The celebrations are supported by Ayala Land, Makati Commercial Estates Association, Rockwell Center, San Miguel Corp., PLDT, Smart Communications, Yuchengco Group of Companies, Globe Telecom, Equitable PCI Bank, Ayala Center, Power Plant Mall, Manila Bulletin and Today.

Center marks 20 years

SHOW TIME

THE CENTER for Pop Music Philippines, the first and largest training school in pop singing, will mark its 20th anniversary with a concert on Friday, May 14, at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

The concert, "Lakbay Musika, Tala ng Asya," features students, coaches and staff of the Center for Pop Music singing songs highlighting the musicality of Asians. Nyoy Volante, a product of the center, is one of the performers.

The center was founded by president Butch Albarracin in 1984, in the garage of the Albarracin residence.

Today, it has 18 branches with extension classes in more than 30 schools.

"Lakbay Musika, Tala ng Asya" is directed by Jun Gomez.

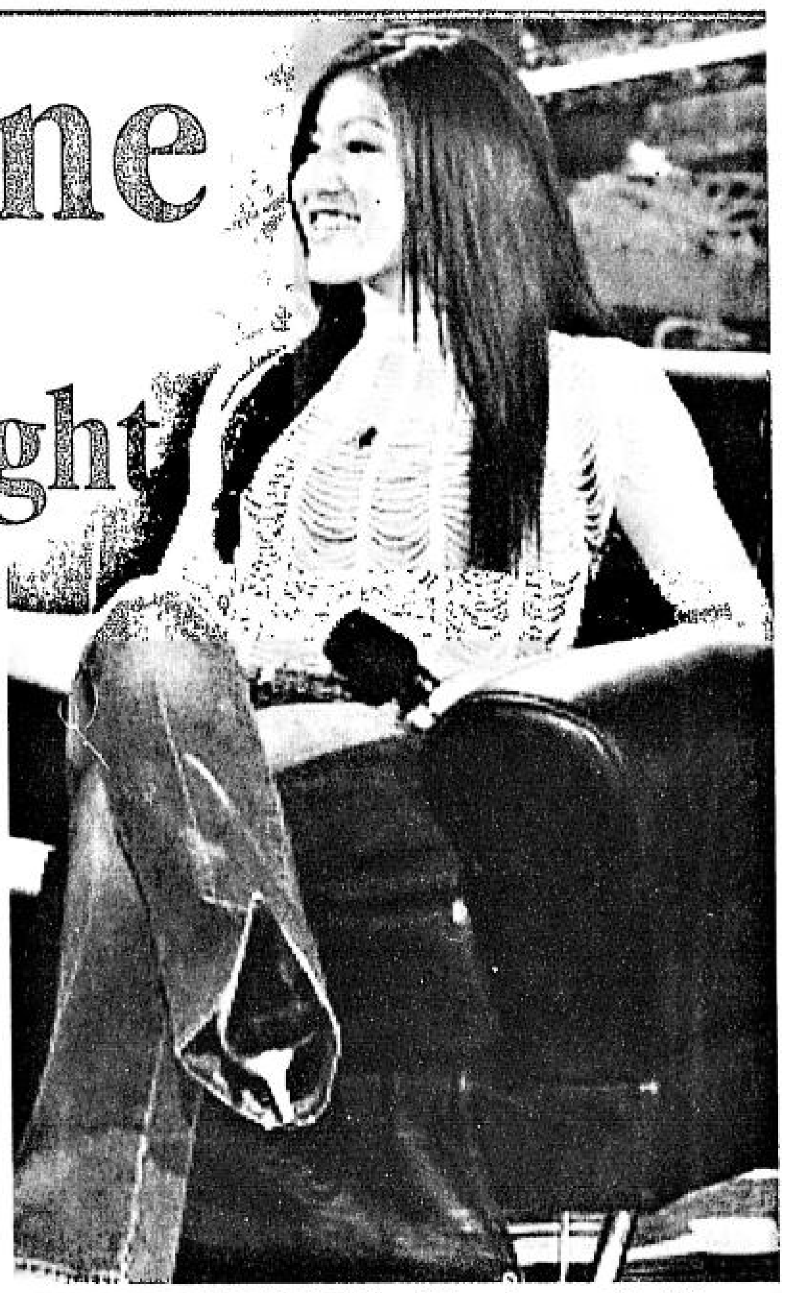
FOUNDER Albarracin hosts the show with daughter Gwyneth

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Jasmine in 'AI' all-girl fight



'CHAOTIC' HOMECOMING. Trias tells host Seacrest "It will be totally crazy when I come back home" to Hawaii.

By Janet Susan R. Nepales
LA Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—It's now an all-girl battle for the "American Idol" crown after soulful African-American finalist George Huff was eliminated from the show, leaving Fil-Am girl Jasmine Trias competing against Fantasia Barrino, LaToya London and Diana DeGarmo.

Trias sang "The Way You Look Tonight" and "Almost Like Being in Love" during the big band-themed night. Since there were only a few of them now, the remaining five finalists had time to do two songs each and tell the audience why they chose these songs.

Dressed in a green top and blue denims, Trias, sitting most of the time on stage, sang "The Way You Look Tonight," which she dedicated to her family and her friends back home. She introduced her next song, "Almost Like Being in Love," by saying, "I would jazz it up."

Judge Paula Abdul liked her performance. Abdul commented, "I liked the second performance very much. You have shown tremendous growth, Jasmine, and I am thrilled for you. Good job!"

Sharp-tongued British judge Simon Cowell simply said, "It was pleasant. The problem with you Jasmine is you are so very predictable. You are very vulnerable right now. You should pull something out of the hat because there's nothing to get excited about you." Judge Randy Jackson agreed.

Huff, who did "Cheek to Cheek" and "What a Wonderful World," also received comments of "playing it safe" from the judges. In the results show the following evening, both Huff and Trias were called on stage as the bottom two. After the commercial break, host Ryan Seacrest disclosed that Trias was "safe."

One at a time

That leaves four girls battling to survive in the disco-themed competition. No less than the "Queen of Disco," Donna Summer, will be there on both nights. Jasmine and the other girls will get to sing with Summer in the results show.

Before the competition and results shows last Tuesday and Wednesday, a one-hour special, "Halfway Home," featuring the five remaining finalists was aired Monday. It offered a longer glimpse at the finalists as they were interviewed individually by host Seacrest, who said, "Tonight, forget about the drama and the tears, forget about the judges, and forget about the competition. Tonight, you'll just find out more about your favorite finalists as we talk to them one at a time."

> Abdul is 'thrilled,' but Cowell says, 'The problem with you Jasmine is... there's nothing to get excited about you'

Best friends

In her chat with Seacrest, Trias, dressed in a pink top and wearing big hoop earrings, revealed that being minors, "we (John Stevens, Diana DeGarmo and Trias) still had to go to school for 15 hours a week and then go back to rehearsing. We have a private tutor who teaches us."

She also said coming back home to Hawaii would probably be "chaotic. It will be totally crazy when I come back home."

During a telephone interview, eliminated finalist John Stevens told INQUIRER Entertainment that he became close to Trias "because I went to school with her three hours a day. We bonded. We became best friends." When Stevens was booted out, the camera focused several times on Trias as she cried. She was visibly sad with the departure of Stevens from the competition.

Asked whether he thought the three hours a day tutoring on top of the many hours of rehearsing proved to be a disadvantage to the minors in the competition, Stevens confessed,

JASMINE/ A27

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1 VAN HELSING	1 CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN	1 CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN	1 GUARANTEED SEATS VAN HELSING 2:25, 5:10, 7:55, 10:40	1 VAN HELSING
2 CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN	2 VAN HELSING	2 STARSKY & HUTCH	2 GUARANTEED SEATS VAN HELSING 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00	2 HELLBOY
3 STARSKY & HUTCH	3 VAN HELSING	3 GUARANTEED SEATS VAN HELSING 1:10, 3:50, 6:30, 9:10	3 GUARANTEED SEATS VAN HELSING 3:05, 5:50, 8:35, 11:20	3 SCHOOL OF ROCK
4 SCHOOL OF ROCK	4 I WILL SURVIVE	4 HELLBOY	4 GUARANTEED SEATS STARSKY & HUTCH 1:50, 4:00, 6:10, 8:20, 10:30	4 I WILL SURVIVE
5 VAN HELSING		5 SCHOOL OF ROCK	5 GUARANTEED SEATS CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE... 1:10, 3:10, 5:10, 7:10, 9:10, 11:10	5 PAYCHECK
		6 VAN HELSING		
		7 MAN ON FIRE		

GB1 GREENBELT 1
1 I WILL SURVIVE 11:50, 2:00, 4:10, 6:20, 8:30
2 VAN HELSING 1:05, 3:50, 6:35, 9:20

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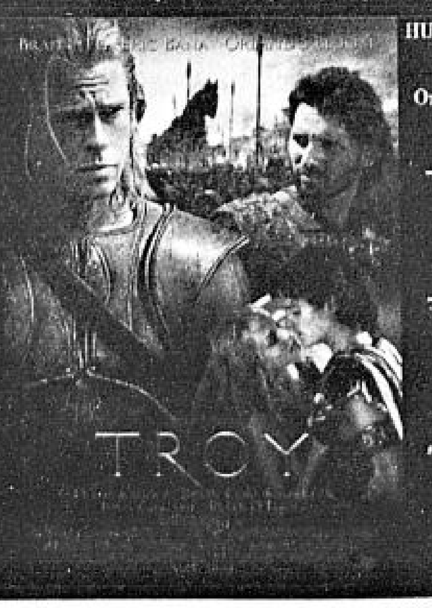

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Ecozone investments up 249% to ₱22.4B

By Ronnel W. Domingo

INVESTMENTS in the country's economic zones in the first four months of the year shot up by 249.3 percent to P22.4 billion from P6.4 billion in the same period last year, the Philippine Economic Zone Authority reported.

Peza documents showed that from January to April, the number of projects approved went up to 96 from 67—an improvement of 43 percent.

Of the P22.4 billion worth of investments committed in the entire first four months of 2004, P2.6 billion were in the information technology industry. The amount represented an increase of 50 percent from P1.44 billion in IT ecozone investments in the same period last year.

The documents showed that a total of P534.9 million in new ecozone locator investments were approved for the month of April. However, this was an 81-percent decrease compared to the P2.86 billion worth of new investments approved in the same month of 2003.

The top three investments approved last month included those of Daiwa Seiko Philippines Corp. (DSPC), YTM Component Inc. and Nima Apparel International Inc. (NAI).

The Peza board approved DSPC's P296-million expansion of its operations at the Laguna International Industrial Park-Special Economic Zone.

The 100-percent Japanese firm is engaged in the manufacture of motor vehicle transmission parts; manufacture and assembly of automotive transmission parts, and machining of motorcycle accessories and parts.

DSPC's project is expected to generate 53 new jobs and a yearly average export sales of $7.3 million.

Also approved was YTM's P85.9-million expansion project for the increase in production capacity of its automotive low tension wires factory at the YTMI Realty-SEZ. YTM—63.2-percent Japanese and 36.8-percent Filipino—expects to post export receipts totaling an average of about $4 million each year from its expanded business.

The third-largest new ecozone venture for April was NAI's P40-million new venture in the manufacture of all kinds of wearing apparel. The project is seen to generate 651 new jobs and an average of $1.4 million worth of exports each year.

Earlier, Peza director general Lilia B. De Lima said that as of end-2003, there were 100 proclaimed economic zones. Of this number, 61 ecozones were hosting more than 1,200 locator enterprises.

DE LIMA

Globe expects ₱15B in net income this year

By Clarissa S. Batino

GLOBE Telecom Inc. is looking to book a net income of about P15 billion this year by introducing more marketing innovations that would sustain the growth in its subscriber base.

The Ayala-controlled firm posted a 52-percent improvement in its net income in the first quarter to P3.1 billion from about P2 billion a year ago. Globe ended 2003 with a net profit of P10.3 billion.

Globe president Gerardo Ablaza Jr. said the company would push all fronts to preserve gains achieved in the first three months of the year. The Globe president, however, did not give any forecast.

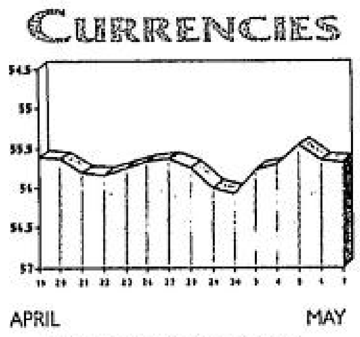
He said the company would likely post favorable numbers in the second quarter given the sustained increase in subscriber base in April.

Ablaza was counting on maintaining throughout the year a heightened subscriber take-up realized in March and April when the company added 370,000 new Globe mobile phone users each month. From 9.1 million at

GLOBE/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



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₱ 55.68= $1
As of 5 p.m., May 7, 2004

¥ 113.17=$ 1
As of 5 p.m., May 10, 2004

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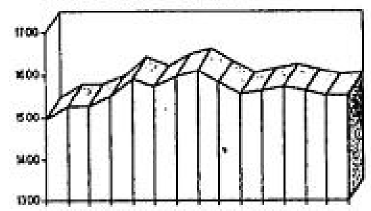
STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Slow trading seen

STOCK analysts expect no major action in the stock market today even as initial indications showed a peaceful conduct of Monday's national elections.

Grace Cerdenia, chief operating officer at online broker 2TradeAsia.com, said the stock market might move up but at a very modest pace.

A sharp sell-off on Wall Street last Friday due to higher crude prices and jitters over interest rates might also dampen market sentiment, analysts said.

"Depending on how the US performs overnight then maybe there may be some upward bias but people are generally waiting until the final tally (of Monday's elections)," Cerdenia said.

An analyst from a local think-tank said the market has already factored into their investment strategies a possible Macapagal-Arroyo victory, which if confirmed this week might not prove to be a surprise.

"What is critical is who will control Congress (and if they can) pass necessary reforms," the analyst said.

Astro del Castillo, managing director for First Grade Holdings, said stock prices and the peso could strengthen substantially should Ms Macapagal win.

"We may see a bullish market and a stronger peso like the last time after the surveys pointed to a GMA lead. But investors will sit it out for now since the electoral process has yet to finish. Everybody is still on the sidelines until there are clearer signals of who's ahead," he said *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

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BOI okays Philex's ₱1.34-B expansion project in Benguet

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BOARD of Investments has approved the granting of incentives to Philex Mining Corp.'s P1.34-billion expansion of its copper mining operation in Benguet, according to BOI managing head Elmer Hernandez.

Hernandez, who is also trade undersecretary, said in an interview that Philex's Padcal mine in Tubao town was currently producing copper ore from a production block it has been mining since 1994.

He said the company decided to tap a deeper production block in order to maintain the required quality of ore for delivery to its processing plant.

Hernandez quoted Philex data, which showed that the current production block would be mined out by next year and would turn out decreasing volumes starting 2006. The expansion project is set for commercial operation starting January 2006.

"The approval of the expansion project is a positive indication that the government continues to support and promote the mining sector as an industry with attractive investment opportunities," the official said.

Based on BOI policy, the status as an expansion activity is available for an existing mining company with an exhausted or nearly exhausted ore deposit but which plans to develop a new deposit near the existing one with the use of the same facility.

Also, the expansion activity, which involves the installation of additional production equipment within the existing plant, should result to an increase in production by at least 25 percent.

The expansion project should also ensure a capacity utilization rate of at least 85 percent.

For the Philex expansion, the company applied to increase production by 72 percent to 20,238 metric tons a day or 6.8 million tons a year.

The expansion is expected to create an additional 204 jobs to the current 2,897 jobs.

Philex is 88-percent owned by Filipinos. Various nationalities share the remaining 12 percent. Among the company's major stockholders is the Social Security System, which holds an 18.6-percent stake.

Last March, Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said the government was looking at the possibility of sub-contracting mining operations to foreign firms to keep up activities at a time when the global mineral market is in an upturn.

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Alabang Country Club B	1,200,000
Baguio Country Club	660,000
Canlubang Golf	430,000
Manila Southwoods A	420,000
Sherwood A	60,000

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CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alta Vista	Pls. Call	-
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Camp John Hay	240,000	-
Capitol Hills	-	135,000
Cebu Country Club	-	1,350,000
Celebrity Sports	160,000	-
Club Filipino	140,000	-
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	300,000*	-
Eastridge A/B*	-	70,000/90,000*
Forest Hills A/C*	170,000/250,000*	-
Manila Golf Ind/Corp.*	-	9,500,000
Manila Polo	-	2,250,000
Makati Sports Club	200,000	Pls. Call
Metropolitan Club A/B*	150,000*	90,000/100,000*
Mimosa C2/C3*	220,000	-
Mimosa Golf Ind.	180,000	-
Orchard A/B*/C**	-	240,000*/Pls. Call**
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	160,000*/180,000**	-
Royale Tagaytay CC	Pls. Call	-
Spa & Lodge	700,000	500,000
Sta. Elena A/B*	1,500,000*	1,200,000/1,250,000*
Tagaytay Country Club	330,000	300,000
Tagaytay Highlands Golf	830,000	-
The Country Club	2,000,000	-
Valley Golf & CC	280,000	200,000
Valle Verde Ind.	150,000	-
Wack Wack Golf	6,700,000	6,000,000

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GG & A Club Shares

SEC License Broker #007575 * As of May 11, 2004

CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,000,000	1,200,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	-	1,300,000
Baguio Country Club	-	600,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	-	70,000
Camp John Hay	200,000	250,000
Canlubang	-	500,000
Canyon Woods	-	180,000
Capitol Hills	135,000	180,000
Cebu Country Club	1,400,000	Please Call
Celebrity Sports Club	-	170,000
Club Filipino	100,000	170,000
Eagleridge "A"	220,000	270,000
Eagleridge "B"	280,000	350,000
Eagleridge "C"	-	350,000
Forest Hills "A"	-	180,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	230,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	250,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	180,000	240,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	250,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	10,500,000	-
Manila Golf (Individual)	9,500,000	10,400,000
Manila Polo	2,250,000	2,400,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	350,000	400,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	550,000	650,000
Manila Yacht Club	-	400,000
Metroclub "A"	110,000	-
Mimosa (Corporate)	250,000	275,000
Montemar (Corporate)	-	25,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	-	350,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	170,000	200,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	240,000	-
Orchard Golf Club "C"	300,000	330,000
Quezon City Sports Club	-	200,000
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	70,000
Sherwood Hills "C"	-	180,000
Rockwell	-	280,000
Spa & Lodge	550,000	600,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,150,000	1,400,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,500,000	1,700,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	180,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	310,000	350,000
Tagaytay Highlands	700,000	800,000
Tagaytay Midlands	680,000	800,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	100,000	150,000
Valley Golf	230,000	300,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,500,000	-

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FIGARO Coffee Systems Inc., represented by its CEO Pacita Juan (second from right), signs the Philippine Business for Social Progress Statement of Commitment as the company becomes a member of PBSP, the country's largest coalition of companies involved in social development. As part of PBSP's roster of 184 member companies, Figaro will contribute time, resources and expertise to support PBSP's poverty reduction programs nationwide. Also shown in photo are Philippine Daily Inquirer chair Marixi Prieto (left) and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. chair Manuel V. Pangilinan.

SEC orders Philcomsat Holdings to conduct stockholders' meeting

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has ordered communications firm Philcomsat Holdings Corp. (PHC) to conduct a stockholders' meeting before the end of the month to elect members of its board.

The SEC found that the company, which is 80-percent controlled by Philippine Communications Satellite Corp. (Philcomsat), has not been conducting its annual membership meeting to elect board directors since 2001.

The SEC last December told the company that it should organize a commission on elections composed of three members to prepare for the stockholders' meeting on May 28.

In its reply last January, Philcomsat directors Philip Brodett and Enrique Locsin told the SEC that its directors were "not averse" to call a stockholders' meeting, but claimed that their "inability" to hold one was allegedly because of a previous attempt by the group of Cristina Ilusorio, Sylvia Ilusorio and Carmelo Africa to control PHC "without legal basis."

Also, there was a delay in the completion of PHC's financial statements for 2001 to 2003 caused by a dispute between the Ilusorio group and the camp of Ambassador Manual Nieto Jr. as to who will make up the governing board of directors in PHC's parent Philcomsat and in Philippine Overseas Telecommunications Corp., which owns 100 percent of Philcomsat.

With the pending dispute as to who controlled PHC's mother firm, it was suggested that the annual meeting of stockholders and the election of directors of Philcomsat and POTC should first be conducted before PHC's.

"In view thereof, and for practical reasons and good order's sake, it was suggested that perhaps the Commission should direct the holding of the annual stockholders' meetings and election of directors and officers of both Philcomsat and POTC at a date prior to those of PHC."

Brodett and Locsin also asked for more time and to forego an annual meeting usually held in May to be able send out notices to all stockholders.

PHC corporate secretary Cristina Agcaoili, meanwhile, later alleged that in contrast to the claims of Brodett and Locsin, "there is no dispute as to who constitutes the governing board of directors and officers of PHC's parent companies, POTC and Philcomsat."

Agcaoili also said that Nieto and his group refused to turn over the corporate records and relinquish control of PHC to Africa and his group.

"It is for this reason that PHC has been unable to conduct annual meetings and its external auditor has been unable to complete the financial statements," she claimed.

She added that POTC and Philcomsat have held meetings and elected directors and that PHC should be able to hold its own meetings independently from its mother firm.

NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS OF SPI TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

All shareholders of SPI Technologies, Inc. ("SPI") are hereby notified that on April 29, 2004, the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") approved **THLPV ACQUISITION, L.P.**'s ("the Bidder") request for an extension of the period for the Tender Offer of SPI Shares ("Shares"). Please note the following modifications:

	Original	Extension
Tender Offer Period	9:00 a.m. of April 12, 2004 to 3:00 p.m. of May 7, 2004	9:00 a.m. of April 12, 2004 to 3:00 p.m. of May 14, 2004
Cross Date	May 20, 2004	May 26, 2004
Payment Date	After 3:00 p.m. on May 20, 2004	After 3:00 p.m. on May 26, 2004

Pursuant to SRC Rule 19 (Tender Offer), which imposes only one closing and completion of a tender offer, please note that even those who have tendered their SPI Shares during the original Tender Offer Period shall be paid after 3:00 p.m. on May 26, 2004.

As of May 4, 2004, Shares committed to be sold and tendered to ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc. (the "Depository") total 266,262,577 Shares, or approximately 85% of SPI's issued and outstanding Shares.

All other Terms of the Tender Offer shall remain the same.

For further inquiries, please contact **Platon Martinez Flores San Pedro & Leaño** at (63-2) 867-4696 or **Ms. Nilaida Enriquez** of the Depository at (63-2) 849-8888.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 7, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank, Inc.	3.05	3.15	3.05	3.15	28,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	42	42	41.5	41.5	601,000
China Banking Corp.	685	685	685	685	1,290
Citystate Savings Bank	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	2,400
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	39	39.5	39	39	252,600
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	24.75	24.75	24	24.5	571,200
Philippine National Bank	23.5	24.25	23.25	24.25	15,300
Security Bank Corp.	16.25	17	16.25	17	3,600
Union Bank of the Phil.	24	24.75	24	24.75	42,100
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.1	1.1	1	1.04	215,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1490	1490	1490	1490	1,700
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	23.75	23.75	23.25	23.25	15,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.67	0.69	0.67	0.69	500,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	820	830	810	830	95,090
Ipeople Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.18	1.2	103,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.62	1.68	1.62	1.66	5,950,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1050	1075	1045	1075	127,220
Ivantage Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	90,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	42,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	19.25	20	19.25	20	702,100
Manila Electric Co. B	31.5	33	31.5	33	1,212,300
Petron Corp.	3.25	3.3	3.2	3.3	4,668,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.16	2.16	2.16	2.16	20,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.99	1	0.99	1	50,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.38	1.4	1.38	1.4	551,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	180,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.52	1.52	388,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3	3	3	3	5,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	1,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	29.5	30	29.5	29.5	181,700
Jollibee Foods Corp.	21	21.5	21	21.25	333,400
RFM Corp.	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	59.5	59.5	59	59.5	53,200
San Miguel Corp. B	74	74	73.5	73.5	267,000
Universal Robina Corp.	7	7	7	7	5,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	350,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	2,453,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.95	3.05	2.95	3.05	125,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.48	1.5	1.48	1.5	25,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9	9.9	9	9.9	7,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.57	0.59	0.56	0.59	9,670,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	40,000
DMCI Holdings, Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	100,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	500,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	20,000
F&J Prince Hldgs. B	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	27.5	28.5	27.5	28.5	1,058,700
Ionics Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	16,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	50,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.43	0.5	0.43	0.5	80,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.12	1.14	1.1	1.14	2,226,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	1,550,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	50,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	15.25	15.25	15.25	15.25	100
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	2,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.08	11,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	130,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	50,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	23.5	23.5	23	23.25	291,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,300
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,200
PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.6	16,981,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	10,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	150,000
Cyber Bay Corporation	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	200,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.215	0.22	0.215	0.22	3,670,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.04	1.04	6,708,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.175	0.175	0.16	0.16	630,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	410,000
SM Development Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.1	1.14	150,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.1	6.3	6.1	6.3	2,562,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	200,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	10,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	3,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	60,000
Pacifica	0.007	0.0075	0.007	0.0075	7,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	1,734,190	53,905,900.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	76,530,810	389,606,060.00
PRO	31,471,000	119,385,820.00
Mining	210,000	53,300.00
OIL	10,060,000	87,500.00
GRAND TOTALS:	120,006,000	563,038,580.00
	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	451.70	DOWN 1.61
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,431.98	UP 6.64
PRO	548.08	UP 2.98
Mining	1,383.95	UP 8.68
OIL	1.20	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	953.21	UP 2.64
Composite	1,554.69	UP 3.00

NO. OF ADVANCES: 27, NO. OF DECLINES: 17, NO. OF UNCHANGED: 38, NO. OF TRADED ISSUES. 82, NO. OF TRADES: 1,959

CURRENCIES

May 10, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.827746	1.000000	55.5470
Japan	Yen	0.007543	0.009113	0.5062
United Kingdom	Pound	1.486797	1.796200	99.7735
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.106135	0.128222	7.1223
Switzerland	Franc	0.644712	0.778877	43.2643
Canada	Dollar	0.600905	0.725953	40.3245
Singapore	Dollar	0.490167	0.592171	32.8933
Australia	Dollar	0.600208	0.725111	40.2777
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.195671	2.652590	147.3434
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.220727	0.266660	14.8122
Brunei	Dollar	0.488720	0.590423	32.7962
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000095	0.000115	0.0064
Thailand	Baht	0.020756	0.025075	1.3928
UAE	Dirham	0.225372	0.272272	15.1239
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.208100	67.1063
Argentina	Peso	0.286665	0.346320	19.2370
Brazil	Real	0.276561	0.334113	18.5590
Denmark	Kroner	0.134394	0.162361	9.0187
India	Rupee	0.018560	0.022422	1.2455
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.217857	0.263193	14.6196
Mexico	New Peso	0.072393	0.087458	4.8580
New Zealand	Dollar	0.523625	0.632591	35.1385
Norway	Kroner	0.122818	0.148377	8.2419
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014408	0.017406	0.9669
South Africa	Rand	0.120254	0.145279	8.0698
Korea	Won	0.000710	0.000858	0.0477
Sweden	Kroner	0.109773	0.132617	7.3665
Syria	Pound	0.018715	0.022609	1.2559
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025030	0.030239	1.6797
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000432	0.000522	0.0290

Globe expects ₱15B . . .

From page B1

the end of the first quarter, Globe subscribers reached almost 9.5 million in end-April.

Globe said it would keep a closer eye on its fierce competitor, Smart Communications Inc., after 1.9 million of its subscribers disconnected and signed up with its rival.

The Globe official admitted that delayed reaction to the competitor's marketing innovations enticed Globe subscribers to switch, but said he hoped the worst was over.

From a peak of about 7 percent in February, Globe's churn rate (the percentage of subscribers disconnecting from its system) had dropped to 4.2 percent in April, according to the Globe president.

Globe said the high churn level reflected the subscribers who left the Globe network from June to October last year when the competitive over-the-air reload service was unchallenged. The Ayala-owned telecom firm said most of the churned subscribers were no longer generating revenues anyway.

Globe said its churn rate had dropped substantially after it introduced in November the Autoload Max, an over-the-air reloading system similar to its competitor's Smart Load. Globe said the credit sharing system called Share-A-Load launched in January also helped.

Smart, with about 14.4 million subscribers in end-March, launched the e-Load and free SIM swap in the second half of 2003. Globe caught up with its Auto Load in late 2003 and the SIM swap early this year.

"It is difficult to quantify the impact of the competition to our revenues. But we would like to point out that our revenues increased faster in the first quarter compared to the fourth quarter of 2003," said Globe chief finance officer Delfin Gonzalez Jr.

Globe, which accounts for 40 percent of the profitable mobile phone market, increased its revenues by 16 percent to P12.8 billion in the first quarter.

Gov't adds more restrictions to bank execs' loan activities

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has again tightened the screw on banks and non-bank financial institutions that are lending to their own directors, officers, stockholders and related interests (Dosri) by restricting the criteria on collateral offered by borrowers.

In a circular approved by the BSP's policy-making Monetary Board last week, the securities—whether shares of stocks or debt paper—issued by the parent company of a bank or a non-bank institution would no longer be allowed as collateral.

For example, a borrower may decide to back up his loan with shares of stocks of the lender's parent bank. But the BSP will classify the borrower's collateral as unsecured—even if the securities offered are "blue chip" stocks.

"If the borrower uses as collateral those securities likewise issued by the lender's parent, there is no new security obtained," said Nestor Espenilla, BSP assistant governor for bank supervision and examination. "The question here is whether securities issued by the parent of a lending company is allowable as collateral.

During an interview, Espenilla explained that there have been many instances when they were asked to clarify issues regarding Dosri lending.

"This is our clarification," Espenilla said. "It is tied to our tightening on Dosri lending."

The BSP is clamping down on banks' Dosri lending to curb excessive credit exposure that could trigger bank failures, like in the case of Orient Commercial Bank Corp. which siphoned off funds for its owner's ambitious real estate projects.

At present, the BSP allows banks to accept as collateral readily marketable bonds and other high-grade securities and blue-chip stocks, provided that the issuing corporation must be publicly listed with a net worth of at least P1 billion and with a record of at least five consecutive years of earnings.

Stocks issued by blue chip firms are considered "first class" collateral, but not those issued by the lenders' parent company.

The BSP also amended its manual of regulations for non-bank financial institutions.

According to the manual "secured loan, borrowing or credit accommodation shall refer to any loan, discount, credit or advance or portion thereof which is secured by real estate mortgage, chattel mortgage on tangible assets, standby letters of credit issued by foreign banks, assignment of or hold-out on deposit substitutes issued by the lending entity, cash margin deposits, assignment or pledge of government securities or readily marketable bonds and other high-grade debt securities—except those issued by the lending entity or by its parent company which owns more than 50 percent of its outstanding shares of stocks or receivables arising from financial leases to the extent of the guaranty deposit plus 60 percent of the remaining value of the leased equipment."

Earlier, the BSP expanded the coverage of Dosri lendings, particularly those pertaining to "related interests" and likewise imposed stiff sanctions against violators.

The MB approved the implementing guidelines for Sec. 36 of the General Banking Law of 2000, which limits Dosri exposure to an amount equivalent to the borrower's unencumbered deposits and book value of paid-in contribution in the bank.

The law also prescribes that each bank's Dosri exposure should not exceed 15 percent of its total loan portfolio or 100 percent of its net worth, whichever is lower.

Local power distributors need a boost, says PCCI

By Abigail L. Ho

STRENGTHENING the country's distribution utilities (DUs) is key to attracting investors to infuse much-needed capital into the power generation sector, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry said.

The business group said no new investors would dare come into the local generation sector if they would not have the assurance that power distributors here were financially viable.

"In order to achieve the near ideal privatization of the gencos (generation companies) and attract true investors and operators, what steps are being taken?" PCCI asked. "Are the DUs being strengthened?"

The DUs will be these gencos major customers, according to the PCCI. If the DUs' financial viability is not assured, investors would likely think twice about investing here as they might not have sure customers for the power they would produce.

Aside from attracting potential investors, viable DUs are also important in ensuring reliable service to customers.

"The DUs deserve very close attention not only because they are eventually the major customers of the gencos, but also because they stand at the end of the line of service, facing the consumers regularly," the PCCI said. "They are the first line of defense as well. Strengthening the financial, operational and organizational capabilities of the DUs is a critical part of the puzzle."

But consumer group National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms (Nasecore) said focus on strengthening DUs should only be given if it were for the protection of consumers.

Nasecore president Pete Ilagan said in a statement that while the group agreed that the government should take a closer look at the financial health of DUs, much attention should also be given to ensuring that these firms would serve their consumers well.

"We have consistently argued that the (Energy Regulatory Commission) should review the books of private DUs to determine whether a portion of the income are plowed back to the business to meet its needed expansion projects, and if loans availed of were really used for its intended purpose," Ilagan said.

He said some DUs might be investing their funds in other business ventures, to the detriment of their service to their customers.

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300,000 - 499,999	5.50	5.75	5.75	6.00	7.00
500,000 - 999,999	6.00	6.25	6.50	6.50	8.00
1.0MM - 4,999,999	7.50	7.50	7.50	7.50	8.00
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GLOBAL MARKETS

Asia stocks crumble as dollar hits 8-month high

SINGAPORE—Asian stock markets crumbled and currencies eased on Monday as the dollar hit eight-month highs against the yen amid a growing consensus the United States may raise interest rates sooner than had been expected.

Crude oil prices remained just below $40 a barrel, near their highest levels since late 1990, stoking worries about inflation, while the dollar gains knocked safe-haven gold to a six-month low of $375.75 an ounce.

Stock indices across Asia slumped to multi-month lows.

Tokyo's Nikkei average fell 4.8 percent to below 11,000 points for the first time since Feb. 27. Japan's main stock index has dropped over 10 percent since hitting a 33-month closing high on April 26.

Analysts said the specter of higher US interest rates, now seen more likely to come as early as next month, would trigger further Wall Street losses and discourage equity investment.

Asia's stock rout was expected to cross over into Europe's markets, with financial bookmakers in London expecting Britain's FTSE 100 to open 30-40 points weaker, Germany's DAX index to open down 40-60 points, and France's CAC-40 to start 40-50 points lower.

Nasdaq 100 futures were down one percent, suggesting further falls on Wall Street.

Markets from Seoul to Taiwan, and Hong Kong to Singapore saw investors dump shares as they steeled for a double whammy of higher US interest rates and rising oil prices.

An MSCI index of Asia Pacific shares excluding Japan fell over 3.6 percent, its biggest one-day fall since September 2001 in the aftermath of hijacked airliner attacks on New York and Washington.

Shares in Japanese mobile phone giant NTT DoCoMo Inc. sank over 13 percent to five-year lows around 187,000 yen after it said on Friday its 2004 operating profit would fall 25 percent on higher 3G-related costs.

The dollar climbed above 113 yen for the first time since September, after data on Friday showed US non-farm payrolls rose more than expected last month, feeding expectations of a rate hike.

According to analysts, the US jobs numbers are key to the timing and pace of US rate rises, which they said would support the dollar by pushing up yields on US assets and making them more attractive to foreign investors.

At 0545 GMT, the US currency hit a high of 113.15 yen, against 112.23 in late US trade on Friday. The euro was at $1.1848, versus $1.1889, well off a four-week high of $1.2180 on Wednesday.

Asian currencies weakened as they also faced political tests in the Philippines, Taiwan, South Korea and India.

The Singapore dollar was at its weakest since mid-March and Australia's dollar fell to a six-month low as investors bet its big yield premium to the US currency would shrink.

US consumer price data for April is due on Friday. A surprise jump in March consumer prices helped fuel expectations the Federal Reserve would soon raise rates from their current four-decade low.

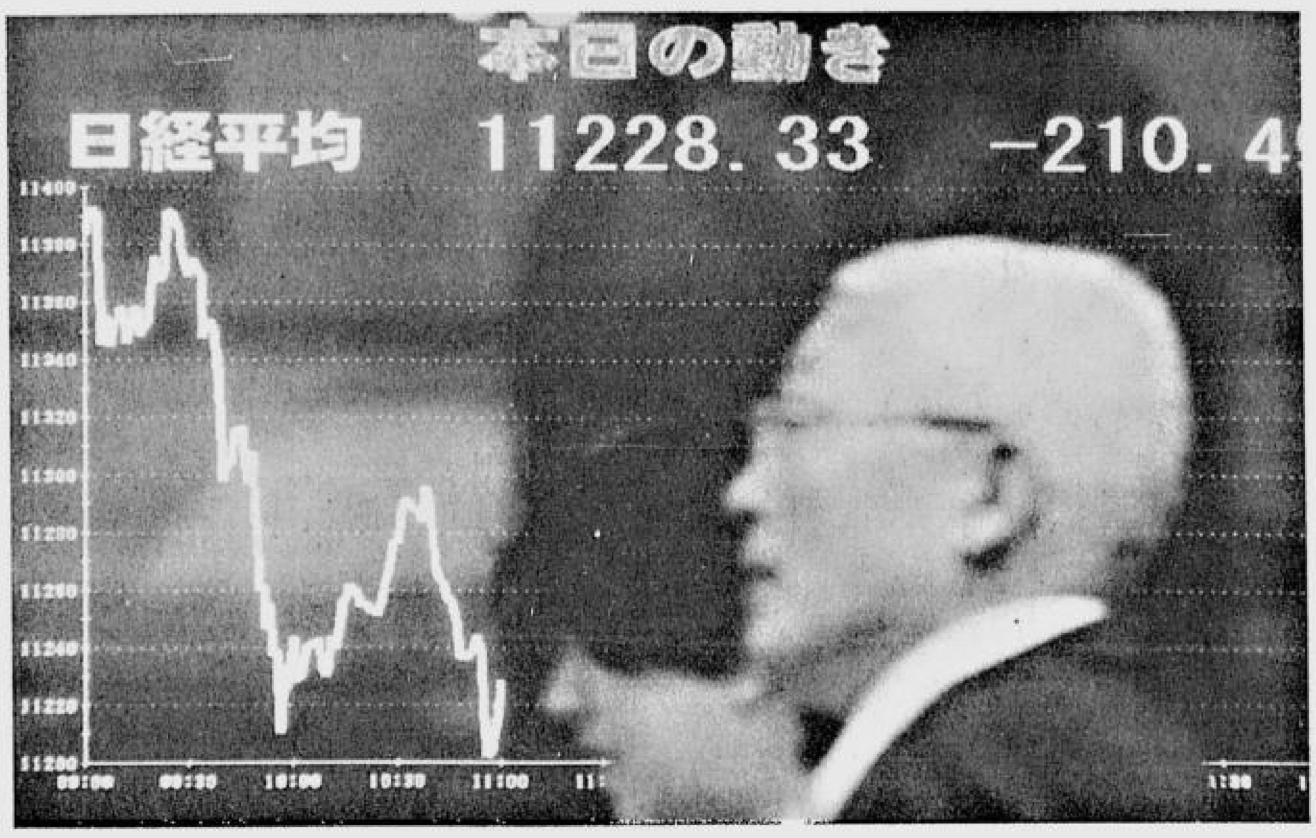
While US rate prospects were in sharpest focus, Shanghai's benchmark composite index slid 1.70 percent amid growing worries China may raise interest rates for the first time in nine years.

One leading Chinese newspaper said last month the central bank would raise commercial bank lending rates after last week's "Golden Week" holiday. Domestic traders said it was hard to predict the timing of any move.

"There's widespread market speculation of an interest rate hike some time in the near term," said Zheng Weigang, senior analyst at Shanghai Securities.

China's one-year lending rate stands at 5.31 percent while its one-year deposit rate is 1.98 percent.

In Tokyo, shares in Sumitomo Chemicals Co. Ltd. jumped over four percent to 506 yen after the company signed a deal with Saudi Arabia to build a giant petrochemicals complex on the Red Sea coast. The plant could see investment of $4.3 billion. *Reuters*



PEDESTRIANS walk past a stock market sign board outside a local securities firm in Tokyo. The Nikkei Stock Average of 225 issues was down 210.49 points, or 1.84 percent, at 11,228.33 points at the end of morning trading amid concerns about higher US interest rates.

AP

World crude oil prices pull back but bull trend seen to continue

SINGAPORE—United States crude futures slipped 0.45 percent early on Monday and brokers said they expected a retracement before another attack on the $40 mark, struck on Friday for the first time in 13 years.

Crude for June delivery on the New York Mercantile Exchange stood 18 cents off at $39.75 a barrel at 0247 GMT in light electronic dealings, with about 3,350 contracts changing hands.

NYMEX crude hit an intraday peak at $40 on Friday's floor session, the highest since late 1990 and only the sixth time US oil futures have traded in the $40s since they were listed.

"Clearly there are not many negative signals for the market, but you'd have to be thinking of taking some profit here," said John Brady, energy broker at ABN Amro in New York. "It would be too good to pass up."

London's IPE Brent crude was bid on the electronic board at $36.79 a barrel and offered at $37.00, equal to Friday's settlement.

Tetsu Emori, chief commodities strategist at Mitsui Bussan Futures in Tokyo, said he remained bullish despite weekend comments by some members of the Opec cartel over a possible rise in the group's official production limits to cool prices.

"We probably need a retracement before we get over $40, but nothing has changed on the fundamentals, which are very strong," Emori said. "I maintain my view that we will be at $43 to $45 for US crude by mid-summer."

The United Arab Emirates on Saturday said that Opec must raise production to cool oil prices and that the group was already taking action by pumping about two million barrels per day (bpd) above official quotas.

Iran also said it would not oppose Opec raising output limits by perhaps one million bpd when the group meets in Beirut on June 3.

Brady said news that Kuwait had beefed up security at six ports after US warnings to oil-rich Gulf states of possible seaborne attacks was a reminder of the strong threat of sabotage at oil infrastructure.

Brady said if US crude could make it over $40, next resistance would kick in at $40.40 and $40.42, which marks the highest ever settlement for US crude futures.

That level was struck in October 1990, when prices also touched the all-time high of $41.15 after Iraq invaded Kuwait, triggering the first Gulf War.

Support for US crude is in the $38.50/$38.30 range, Brady said. *Reuters*

In Asia, computer sales up 16%

SINGAPORE—Computer sales in the Asia-Pacific region, excluding Japan, totaled 8.09 million in the March quarter, up 16 percent on the year, according to an industry report.

On a three-month basis, sales were up two percent from the December quarter on the back of stronger consumer confidence, technology research house Gartner Inc. said in a report.

The first quarter "is typically a seasonally weaker quarter due to the Chinese New Year holidays celebrated in many Asian countries, where a decline in sequential growth rate is expected," said Gartner's regional principal analyst for hardware and systems.

"However, market confidence was stronger as compared to the same quarter last year while India, South Korea and the Philippines exhibited strong quarterly growth rates derived primarily from strong purchases from the professional sector."

During the March quarter, India overtook Australia as the third largest computer market.

India came in behind China and second-placed South Korea, the report said.

Mobile computers, made up mainly of laptops, showed the biggest sales increment on a percentage basis as consumers bought 42 percent more in the March quarter compared with a year ago.

Sales of desktop computers, which make up 81 percent of the total computer market, grew an annual 11 percent in the three months to March. *AFP*

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given of the estate of the late EUFRONIO DE LEON was extrajudicially settled and sold among and by the heirs as per Doc 229 Page 46 Book VIII Series 2004 before Notary Public Atty. Lourdes T. Pagayatan of Quezon City.
(PDI - May 4, 11 & 18, 2004)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE ESTATE OF THE LATE PLAMA B. LIGUTAN HAS BEEN EXTRAJUDICIALLY SETTLED BY HER HEIRS AS PER DOC NO. 294; PAGE NO. 60; BOOK NO. I; SERIES OF 2004 BY PORFIRIO M. BAUTISTA NOTARY PUBLIC OF PARANAQUE CITY (PDI-MAY 4, 11 & 18, 2004)

NOTICE OF LOSS

29,645 Globe Mackay shares with Certificate No. 56343 registered in the name of of Elaine O. Herbosa and/or Ma. Elena Sanchez ITF Ongpin Children have been lost. If no contest is received, new certificate will be issued.(PDI-May 4, 11 & 18, 2004)

500 SPI Technologies Inc. shares with Certificate No. B-4895 registered in the name of Maria Isabel G. Ongpin have been lost. If no contest is received, new certificate will be issued. (PDI-May 4, 11 & 18, 2004)

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Lyceum of the Philippines, Inc
Notice of Loss of Stock Certificates
The public is hereby informed of the loss of Stock Cert. Nos. 9, 10, 370, 453, 454, 473, 514, 674, 1836 and 1837 issued in the names of Victor A. Arches and/or Minda N. Arches. If no contest is presented in the Corporation regarding the above-mentioned stock certificates within one year from this notice, the right to contest shall be barred, and the corporation shall issue new certificates in lieu of the lost ones subject to and in accordance with provisions of Section 73 of the Corporation Code.
(PDI-May 4, 11 & 18, 2004)

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UCPB RURAL BANK, INC.
NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the UCPB Rural Bank, Inc. will be held on May 21, 2004 at 3:00 p.m. at the Xavier Estates Sports and Country Club, Cagayan De Oro.

The Agenda of the Meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Proof of Notice of Meeting
3. Certification of Quorum
4. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Stockholders Meeting held on April 28, 2003.
5. Chairman's Annual Report
6. Approval of the Audited Financial Statements
7. Ratification of all acts and proceedings of all acts of the Board of Directors and of Management since the last stockholders meeting.
8. Election of the Members of the Board of Directors
9. Other matters
10. Adjournment

(Sgd.) **JOSE A. BARCELON**
Corporate Secretary

(PDI--May 11, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Science and Technology – Bids and Awards Committee (DOST-Wide BAC) hereby invites local contractors classified and registered with the Philippine Contractor Accreditation Board (PCAB) as Medium A, to apply for eligibility and to bid in the forthcoming public bidding for the project entitled "Completion of the Administration, Academic I and Dormitory I Buildings" of the Philippine Science High School – Eastern Visayas Campus (PSHS-EVC) at Pawing, Palo, Leyte. The approved budget for the purpose is P6,382,600.00 chargeable against PSHS-EVC.

Eligibility forms shall be available for issuance to interested contractors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P300.00 and P4,000.00 for the issuance of bidding documents to eligible and qualified bidders. Only those eligible bidders evaluated by the DOST-Wide BAC shall be allowed to participate in the bidding.

All eligible bidders may secure the necessary documents on the following dates:

Receive bidders LOI & issue Eligibility Requirements	May 26-28, 2004, Rm. 207 DOST Bldg. Gen. Santos Ave., Bicutan, Taguig
Submission of Eligibility Requirements	June 01-03, 2004 until 5:00 p.m. at Rm. 207, DOST Bldg., Gen. Santos Ave., Bicutan Taguig
Issuance of bidding documents	June 23-25, 2004 at Rm. 207 DOST Bldg.
Pre-bid Conference	July 07, 2004; 10:00 a.m. / PSHS-EVC, Pawing, Palo Leyte
Opening of bids	July 23, 2004; 10:00 a.m. / DOST Executive Lounge, Bicutan, Taguig

Prospective bidders may surf our DOST website addressed at http://www.dost.gov.ph.

The DOST-Wide BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any formality and make an award to the bidder whose bid proposal is the lowest calculated, responsive bid and advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **JOCELYN G. ALVARADO**
Assistant Secretary
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(PDI – May 11 & 18, 2004)

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OF PASIG CITY

Peacefully joined our Lord on May 10, 2004 at the age of 83.

His loving wife **LYDIA**; children **JOLET, LOJET, GEORGE, JEJET**; sister **AIDA**; grandchildren and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the family residence #23 Dr. Pilapil Street, Pasig City. Interment will be on Saturday, May 15, 2004 at Pasig Catholic Cemetery after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at Immaculate Conception Cathedral Parish, Pasig City.

> **"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."**
> John 3:16

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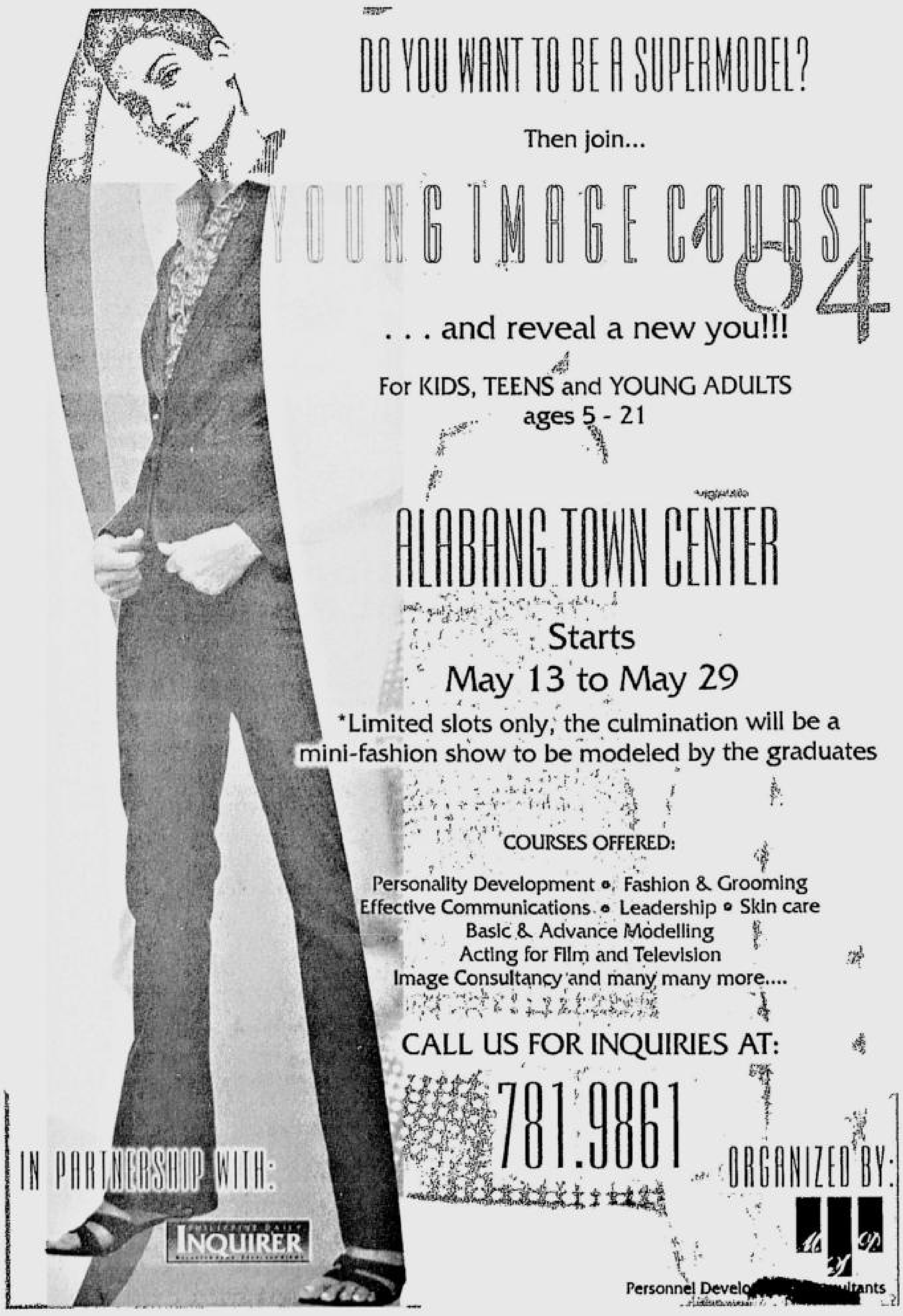

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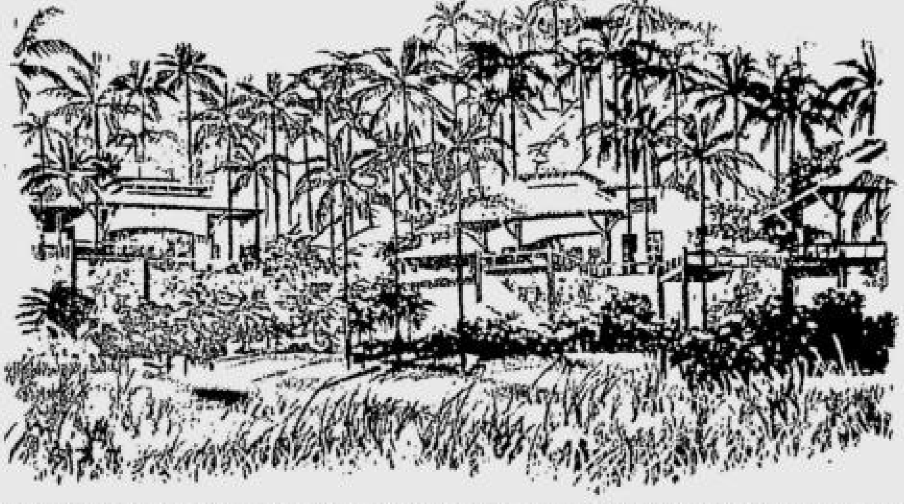
Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

Albay resort seen as next world-class tourist destination



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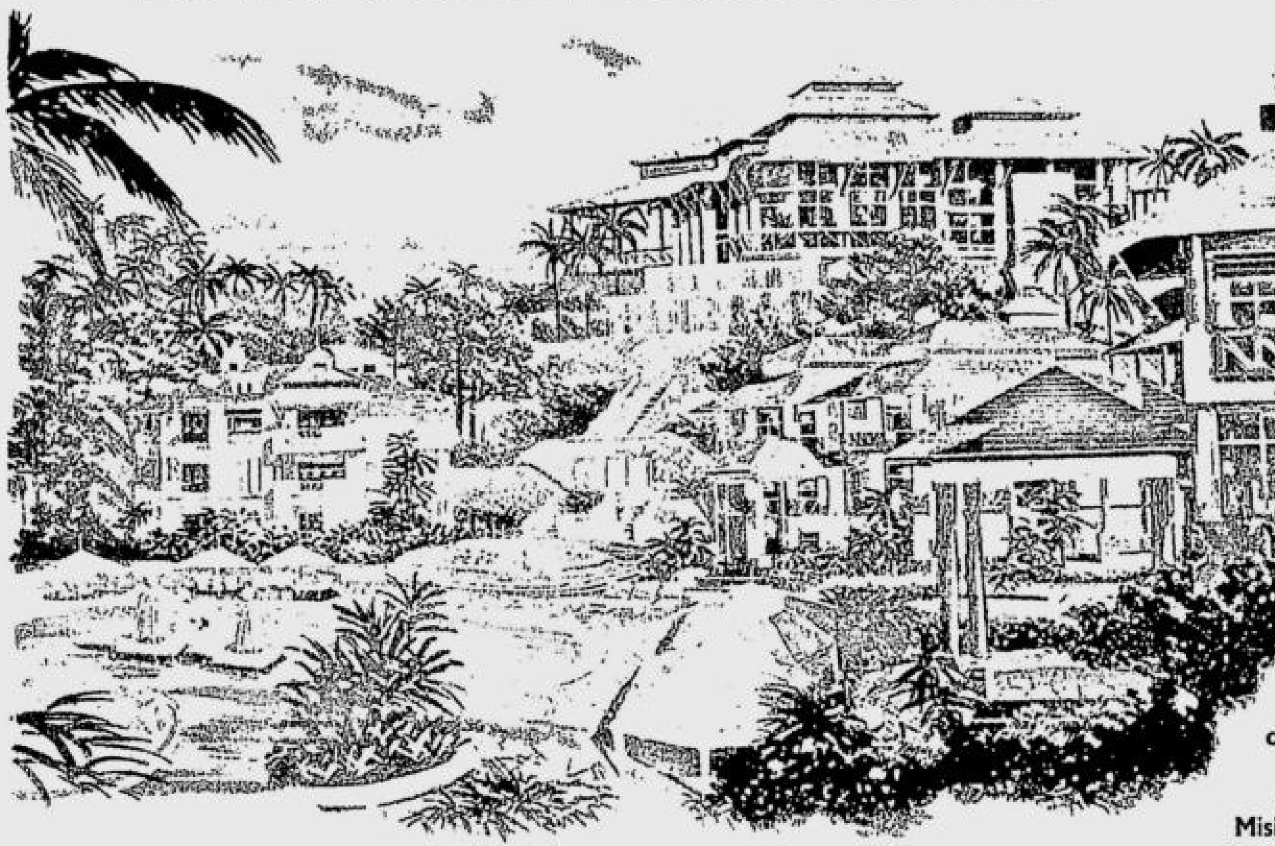
NILO JESUS ORBETA



BIG villas and clusters are just some of the amenities that Misibis Beachfront Spa and Residential Resort will offer once it becomes fully operational in 2007.

By Gil Francis G. Arevalo
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

WITH ITS grand launch last April 25, the Misibis Beachfront Spa and Residential Resort in Bacacay, Albay, is now seen as the next world-class tourist destination in the country.

Even before the launch, many local and foreign tourists had already visited and were amazed by its long stretch of fine white sand and fully nature-packaged beauty.

And this new tourist destination in eastern Albay, some 45 minutes by land and water, is making an extensive effort to land in the top 10 world-famous resorts, along with the "overvisited" resorts in Phuket in Thailand, Bali in Indonesia, Maldives in India, Waikiki in Hawaii, Scandinavia, Greece and California beaches.

Said Philippine Tourism Agency (PTA) general manager Robert Dean Barbers in an exclusive interview with the INQUIRER: "We're very supportive of Elizalde Co's effort to eventually make the place recognized or perhaps honored to be in the top 10 world's famous resorts. It can be noted that as far as naturalness and exotic beauty are concerned, it's even more alluring and beautiful than the man-made beachfront resorts in Thailand, Indonesia, and even in some countries in Europe."

Co is the chief executive officer of the Sunwest Realty Corp., owner-developer of the resort.

Barbers added that "as general manager of PTA, we're tapping the tremendous potential of this place. It's a complete haven, as it has the water, sand and mountains."

Beachfront

Misibis Beachfront Spa and Residential Resort is about a billion-peso project of Sunwest Realty. The 40-hectare beachfront property is nestled at the south coast of the Pacific Ocean, accessible via a three-kilometer route to the Sula Channel in Bacacay, Albay.

It is strategically divided into two parts. The first 20 hectares are allotted to a world-class beachfront spa resort and residential houses, while the remaining 20 hectares are for the "wild" side of the place with the presence of a wildlife sanctuary.

It is in accordance with the local government's declaration that most part of Cagraray Island is an eco-tourism zone.

Thus, the wildlife sanctuary is for other tourists who can't afford to go to the resort or would want to commune with nature as it is intended to provide a place for them to roam around and experience the exhilarating beauty of the island and the serenity of the environment.

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Natural package

The place offers a panoramic view of the Mayon Volcano, Sula Channel (sanctuary of galleons in times of typhoon), Pototan Cave in Batan Island (known for its teeming terraces of waterfall like a contour of pools of water overflowing from its "cauliflower" structure, and its exotic underground rivers), Bacon-Manito geothermal site and Nag-asu Lake (the burning lake of Albay), and a prime attraction of unique fish habitats and whale shark interaction.

Only 20 minutes away from Barangay Misibis by boat, one can already witness a whale shark, locally known as butanding—a protected aquatic species that visits the Bicol Region to feed at the mouth of the Donsol River.

By 2005, the resort will formally operate a cable car that will provide a three-kilometer cable route from Sula Channel up to Sitio Mosboron, Barangay Misibis in Cagraray Island, Bacacay, Albay.

It features world-class amenities such as residential houses, two big villas, six clusters, infinity pools, lagoons and beachfront cabanas whose construction is in full swing. Full completion of these structures is targeted by 2005.

Still in the development phase are the restaurant and poolside bar, function rooms, souvenir shop, sauna and spa, grand main lobby, chapel, business center, auto terrain vehicles, driving range, indoor games, tennis court, water sport activities, marina and horseback riding. All of these will be fully available in 2005 or 2006.

There's also a clubhouse that can accommodate more than 500 guests and a big hotel, which will be available to guests by as early as 2006. It will be fully operational by year 2007.

Residential

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RP realty business goes global via eCreba

OVERSEAS Filipino and foreign investors interested in Philippine real property will soon have direct access to local property owners and sellers with the launch last week of eCreba, the first Philippine real property supermall online.

The multimillion-peso joint-venture project of Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Creba) and GeoSpatial Solutions Inc (GSI) in cooperation with IBM, is aimed at penetrating a large global market of some four million overseas Filipinos, foreign investors and expatriates, prospective retirees and tourists.

Creba said that with its cutting-edge features and functions, the eCreba Internet Portal is projected to bring in some P3.2 billion in foreign currency annually and speed up local development by showcasing to foreign direct investors and tourists the investment and tourism potentials of the various localities.

It will also improve the financial position of government financing institutions and banks through the sale of real property and other assets, and project to the global business community a favorable investment climate in this country. Very soon, Creba said, it will be the only Internet facility where real property buyers and investors worldwide will congregate.

Powerful marketing tool

The eCreba features an extensive and powerful real property data base and search engine, including an online auction system, completed by a powerful marketing tool—an interactive online Geographic Information system (GIS) integrated with a computerized lot parcel mapping system.

Designed and operated by GSI's pool of geodetic engineering specialists, the online GIS-lot plan/vicinity mapping system will provide prospective buyers and investors valuable geophysical, economic and regulatory information about the offered property and its local environment. This gives them a better insight into the property's investment value and potentials, without having to travel all the way to the Philippines.

Through electronic documentation and online payments mechanisms, linked with online banking systems, and protected by the portal's advanced security systems, sellers in this country and overseas buyers will be able to consummate transactions, electronically sign contracts, and effect payments right in front of their computers.

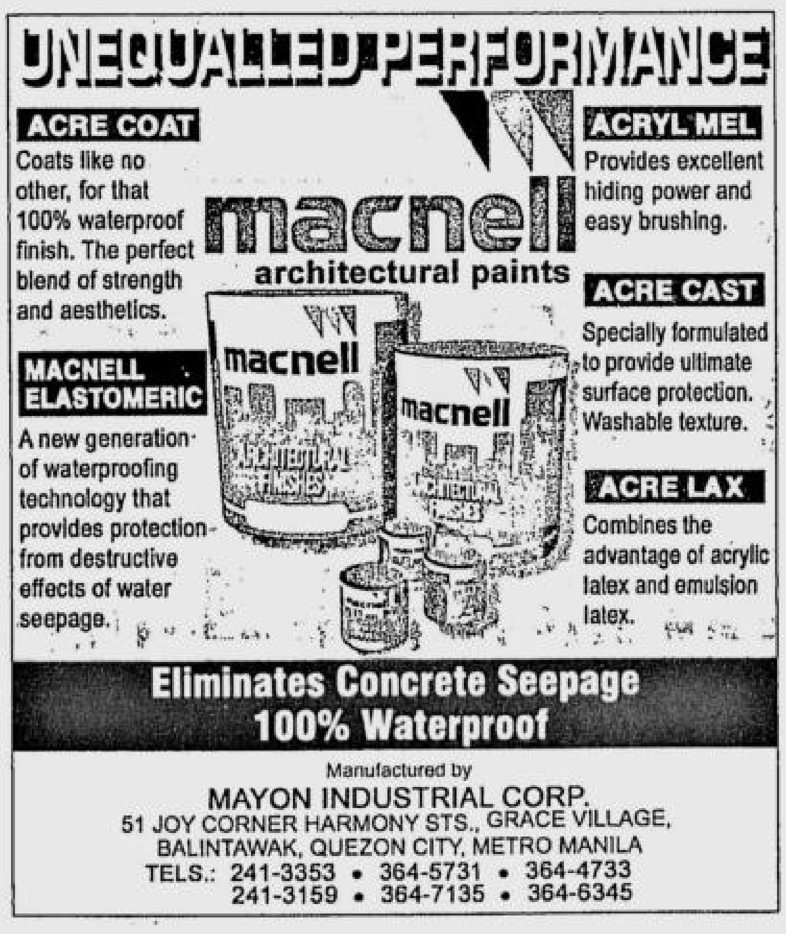
Personal touch

Apart from these value-packed services, Creba said, what really distinguishes eCreba from ordinary business-to-computer (B2C) websites and portals is its ability to provide electronic transactions that "personal touch," which Filipinos known for their warmth, look for in any transaction.

eCreba answers this need with such communication facilities as text chat, voice and video conferencing, which will allow property sellers within the portal to exhaustively field inquiries by prospective buyers located anywhere in the world, and showcase their property through virtual tours and other "personal" demonstration mechanisms.

eCreba also integrates mechanism which will ensure transparency of transactions and safeguard the interests of both buyers, sellers and government alike, Creba said.

Creba also stressed it will embark on aggressive promotion worldwide to attract considerable Internet traffic into the portal, which is the key to the success of Internet-based business.



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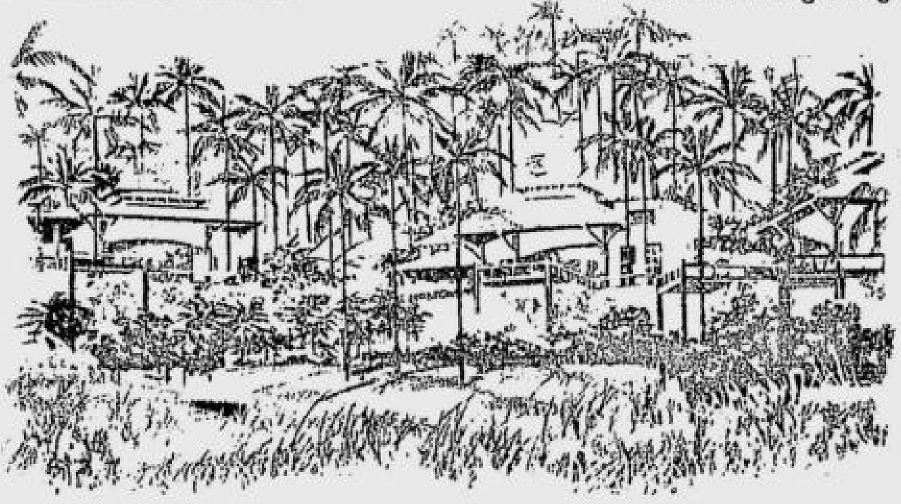

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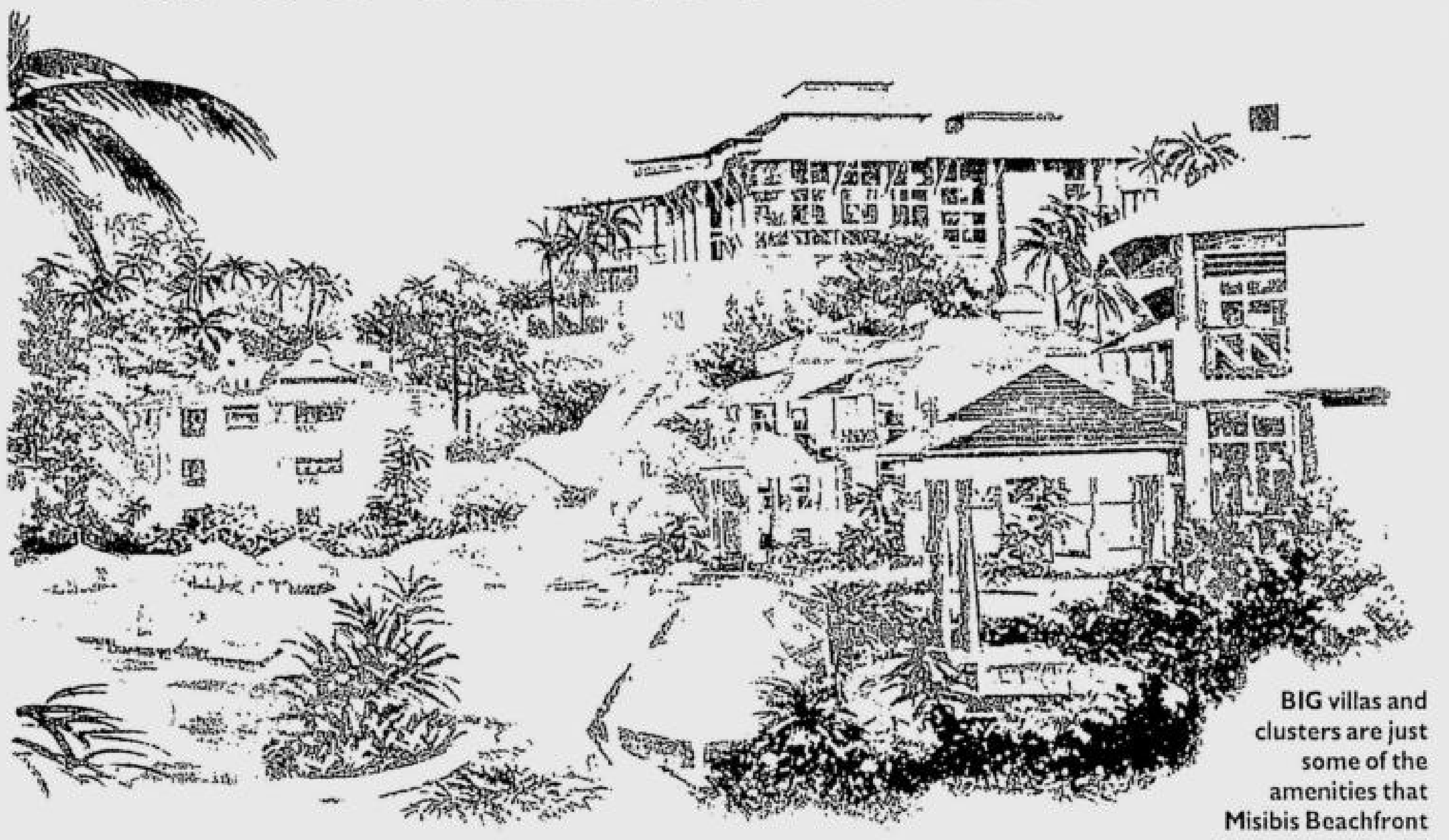

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By 2005, the resort will formally operate a cable car that will provide a three-kilometer cable route from Sula Channel up to Sitio Mosboron, Barangay Misibis in Cagraray Island, Bacacay, Albay.

It features world-class amenities such as residential houses, two big villas, six clusters, infinity pools, lagoons and beachfront cabanas whose construction is in full swing. Full completion of these structures is targeted by 2005.

Still in the development phase are the restaurant and poolside bar, function rooms, souvenir shop, sauna and spa, grand main lobby, chapel, business center, auto terrain vehicles, driving range, indoor games, tennis court, water sport activities, marina and horseback riding. All of these will be fully available in 2005 or 2006.

There's also a clubhouse that can accommodate more than 500 guests and a big hotel, which will be available to guests by as early as 2006. It will be fully operational by year 2007.

Residential

And what makes it more strategic, according to two of the company's business planning and

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RP realty business goes global via eCreba

OVERSEAS Filipino and foreign investors interested in Philippine real property will soon have direct access to local property owners and sellers with the launch last week of eCreba, the first Philippine real property supermall online.

The multimillion-peso joint-venture project of Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Creba) and GeoSpatial Solutions Inc (GSI) in cooperation with IBM, is aimed at penetrating a large global market of some four million overseas Filipinos, foreign investors and expatriates, prospective retirees and tourists.

Creba said that with its cutting-edge features and functions, the eCreba Internet Portal is projected to bring in some P3.2 billion in foreign currency annually and speed up local development by showcasing to foreign direct investors and tourists the investment and tourism potentials of the various localities.

It will also improve the financial position of government financing institutions and banks through the sale of real property and other assets, and project to the global business community a favorable investment climate in this country. Very soon, Creba said, it will be the only Internet facility where real property buyers and investors worldwide will congregate.

Powerful marketing tool

The eCreba features an extensive and powerful real property data base and search engine, including an online auction system, completed by a powerful marketing tool—an interactive online Geographic Information system (GIS) integrated with a computerized lot parcel mapping system.

Designed and operated by GSI's pool of geodetic engineering specialists, the online GIS-lot plan/vicinity mapping system will provide prospective buyers and investors valuable geophysical, economic and regulatory information about the offered property and its local environment. This gives them a better insight into the property's investment value and potentials, without having to travel all the way to the Philippines.

Through electronic documentation and online payments mechanisms, linked with online banking systems, and protected by the portal's advanced security systems, sellers in this country and overseas buyers will be able to consummate transactions, electronically sign contracts, and effect payments right in front of their computers.

Personal touch

Apart from these value-packed services, Creba said, what really distinguishes eCreba from ordinary business-to-computer (B2C) websites and portals is its ability to provide electronic transactions that "personal touch," which Filipinos known for their warmth, look for in any transaction.

eCreba answers this need with such communication facilities as text chat, voice and video conferencing, which will allow property sellers within the portal to exhaustively field inquiries by prospective buyers located anywhere in the world, and showcase their property through virtual tours and other "personal" demonstration mechanisms.

eCreba also integrates mechanism which will ensure transparency of transactions and safeguard the interests of both buyers, sellers and government alike, Creba said.

Creba also stressed it will embark on aggressive promotion worldwide to attract considerable Internet traffic into the portal, which is the key to the success of Internet-based business.

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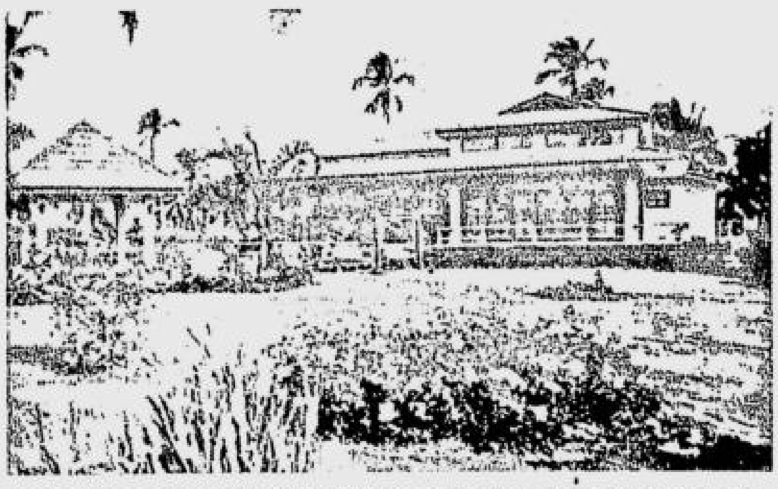
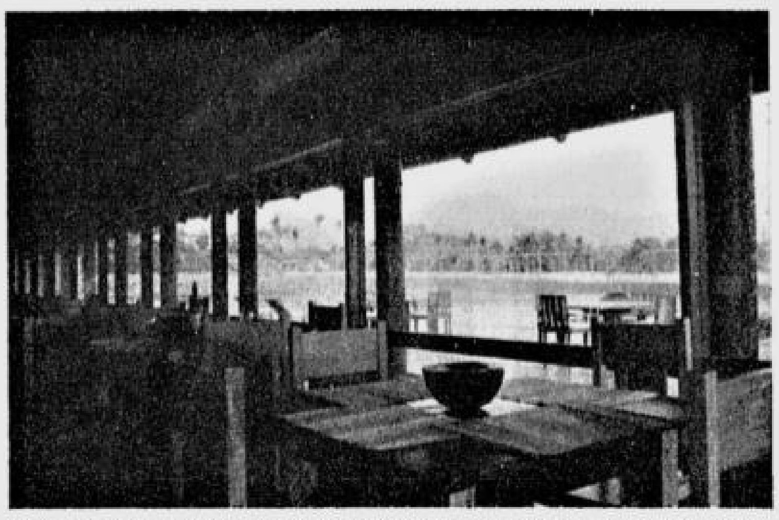


ONE of the earliest structures to rise at La Finca belongs to property developer Mario Oreta, where would-be owners can have an idea on how to design their own homes.

WITH THE SWIMMING pool, bath house (steam bath) and jacuzzi now operational, visitors can fully enjoy La Finca's Country Club.



AN indoor and al fresco restaurant overlooking the mountains offers a refreshing dining backdrop.

Dev't of La Finca resort in full blast

ONE can enjoy fishing at the lagoon and have that catch cooked and prepared for his or her dining pleasure.

By Charles E. Buban

WOULD-BE owners of La Finca Country and Resort are getting closer to finally enjoying their dream vacation homes as developments in this 18-hectare property recently shifted to full blast.

"Last month, we just launched the Country Club complete with its swimming pool, bath house (steam bath), jacuzzi, an indoor and al fresco restaurant, tennis court, gym and even a fishing lagoon," reported Lisette Baltazar, La Finca sales and marketing director.

With the completion of these facilities, Baltazar said several activities are lined up in the coming weeks for its future residents and their guests.

"This month we will hold activities like mountain climbing, badminton tournaments and summer camps while in June we are scheduling cooking lessons and an on-the-spot painting of the Malarayat," she revealed.

Full enjoyment

Baltazar explained that these activities are meant to fully enjoy the amenities offered at La Finca Country Club.

"Most of our buyers are end-users meaning they purchased their lots for their own use as opposed to others who just bought it to be sold afterward after it has appreciated in value. Most of our buyers love it here and expect to fully enjoy our facilities here," Baltazar revealed.

La Finca is located in one of the loveliest corners of Lipa City in Batangas and with the breathtaking Mount Malarayat as backdrop, the place offers a perfect second home for families:

Exclusive ambience

Apart from its location (fronting the second gate of Malarayat Golf and Country Club), the available 127 lots will give La Finca an exclusive ambience.

"La Finca is a new concept for one's second home by combining the energizing lifestyle of the gentleman-farmer with modern, exciting resort amenities," revealed Baltazar.

This new concept was introduced amid today's difficult economic situation wherein buyers have become more demanding with their choice of real estate property.

"Our buyers have to be sure they only get the best value before they part with their hard-earned money. With our aggressive and proactive marketing team, our challenge is to communicate to our market how good a choice La Finca is for their family," related Baltazar.

Baltazar suggested buyers to grab the opportunity right now to buy lots at La Finca since today's prices are down and more flexible terms are being given.

Fully managed farm

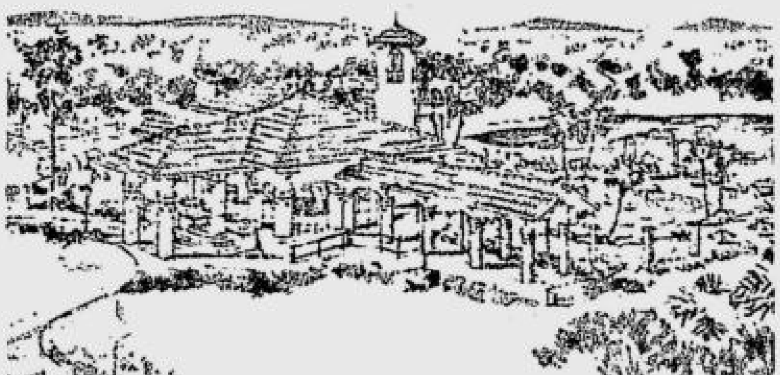
Owning a home at La Finca provides a fully managed farm with seedlings provided by its very own greenhouse and nursery, which supervises the selection, propagation, growing and care of the garden.

"Residents are given a wide variety of choices of crops and ornamental plants," Baltazar said.

Baltazar also revealed full-time agronomists and horticulturists are on hand to make sure the plants grow and bear fruit.

Through a selling activity called Pick and Pay, La Finca also helps residents sell their own produce.

Country club membership offered to Filinvest Cavite homebuyers



ARTIST'S perspective of El Sorrento Sports and Country Club in Tanza, Cavite

FROM LEFT are Janette Manlangit, business development officer, El Sorrento Sports and Country Club; Winnifred Lim, AVP special projects, Filinvest Land; Roberto Arcebal, project group head, Futura Value Homes Division, Filinvest Land; and Edgardo Cristobal, sector head.

FILINVEST Land is now offering a country club membership at El Sorrento Sports & Country Club in Tanza, Cavite as a generous bonus to buyers and residents of its residential developments in Cavite.

The dream of owning country club shares to enhance their living standards has always been prohibitive.

Filinvest Land created the concept of offering a country club membership at El Sorrento Sports & Country Club as a privilege for buyers who purchase homes in Springfield View, Brookside Lane, Woodville and Westwood Place.

Located 30 kilometers from Metro Manila, El Sorrento Sports & Country Club is a dream. A 1.5-hectare Spanish Mediterranean-themed haven, El Sorrento Sports & Country Club fits the bill for families who want an enhanced quality of life.

The sports-driven club will have sports and recreational amenities for every age group. A fitness center with gym, aerobics center and locker facilities will certainly be a popular place for health buffs. For less active sports, an indoor recreational hall will feature billiards, table tennis and bowling lanes. Outdoor action will center on tennis, basketball and swimming pools and a children's playground.

. Socializing with family, neighbors and friends can be organized at the proposed pavilion with function room and terrace dining.

During the recent groundbreaking of El Sorrento Sports & Country Club, Filinvest Land's sellers and buyers participated in releasing butterflies into the open space in anticipation of a good life unfolding.

For more information on El Sorrento Sports & Country Club and Filinvest's residential projects (Springfield View, Brookside Lane, Woodville and Westwood Place), please call 727-0431.

Best deal at realty auctions

BUILDING DREAMS

By Alexis A. Acacio

FOLLOWING the upsurge of public auction of used cars, acquired assets by financial institutions are now being sold off at auction venues. Many of our readers have asked for advice on how to go about buying real estate at these auctions.

Many questions arise: Is the auction the best venue to buy the property? Do they really sell at bargain prices? Do they give the best interest rates?

The answer to these series of questions is straightforward: In buying real estate at an auction, you should still follow the same due diligence as if you are buying it from anybody else. You still would have to assess in detail your needs, wants and most especially your finances. In short, there are no shortcuts to follow.

Selling desirable pieces of real estate property through an auction is one of the latest trends of marketing real estate. This is in sharp contrast to the more conventional negotiated sales technique. In an auction sale, many buyers are bidding on one piece of property at a single time.

Things to look out for

In an auction, there are a few items to be careful about:

- **Everything May Look Like a Steal**—Due to how pieces of property are packaged, everything in an auction might look like a bargain. But remember that in real estate, price can be relative—a property might be valuable for one but may be practically useless for another. You should have a fair valuation of the property that you are interested in and you might need the help of a property inspector.
- **Minimum Bid Price**—Most real estate auctioneers set a minimum bid price or an indicative price. If you are not comfortable with the minimum price, then there is no point in bidding for the property.
- **Comparable Pieces of Property**—Always compare pieces of property before buying real estate at an auction. Make a short tabulation of the types and features of the pieces of property together with their prices. It is not a good idea to compare and look at pieces of property that are only in the auction list. As soon as you are set on an area, look at as many pieces of property as possible from all sources—ads, brokers, friends, direct sellers. In other words, spend time searching for them.
- **Bidding War**—Once a bidding war erupts, then the price of the property can soar to unexpected values. Be always conscious on the maximum price that you would want to pay for the property.
- **Always Inspect the Property**—Never buy a property without actually seeing the property yourself. Real property is a high priced property and it is difficult to make a mistake in your purchase.
- **Occupancy**—If there are still occupants on the property, make sure that they would move out peacefully after you would have bought the property. Many property buyers, after paying the full purchase price for the property, had problems with the existing occupants. Have this issue clear with the owner of the property.

Advantages

Pieces of property sold at auctions usually give favorable terms and conditions to buyers. Some groups offer a 10 percent down payment and 10 percent interest rate. These terms may not be offered to you if you would follow the regular buying process.

Also sold at auctions are pieces of property foreclosed by banks that were originally pieces of collateral property. So at the time that they were offered as collateral, the bank had already checked the title for its validity. But do remember that there might be new liens and claims against the property so you should still exercise extreme care in checking for these. You may have to get the services of a competent professional to take care of these matters.

Final Note. Buying at an auction can give you advantages but do understand there are things and issues you should look out for. An auction is a relatively new marketing tool that offers an alternative to the traditional negotiated sale process.

As in any real estate transaction, you should exercise due diligence in buying whether it be from an auction sale, developer, direct seller, owner's representative or broker. It is always prudent to assess your real needs and wants before you buy.

* * *

E-mail the author at aaacacio@pacific.net.ph.

How to profitably buy, sell real estate

IN MOST cases, investing in real estate like build-and-sell or property development would in some way involve the initial stage of buying real estate and then selling it later on.

Many investors would attest that profit can be made or lost in these two important stages because of the many crucial factors like techniques in evaluating location, how to enhance selling price or even avoiding mistakes on clear-cut rules such as documentation and taxation.

In this regard, the Urban Institute of Real Estate will conduct a seminar on "How to Profitably Buy and Sell Real Estate" on May 20, from 1:30 to 6 p.m. at Max's Restaurant, Glorietta 2, Park Square Drive, Ayala Center, Makati City.

The lecturer is engineer Enrico S. Cruz, a licensed real estate consultant, broker and appraiser and real estate fellow, who has more than three decades of working experience in engineering, construction, education and real estate development.

For more details, interested parties may call 681-0928 or e-mail urbanet@pacific.net.ph.

Albay resort seen as next world-class tourist destination

From page B7

marketing consultants, Marina Charina Garcia and Celedonio Pile, is its being a residential and subdivision resort.

"The price of the residential houses is very affordable, compared to the rising price in emerging subdivision lots in Albay," said Pile. "This is but a second home for prospective buyers plus the free and given beauty of the place."

Garcia added that insofar as accessibility is concerned, "the roads are very excellent. Just imagine, 45 minutes after traveling by plane from Manila, Misibis will be readily accessible to you. There are so many good beaches in the country but the problem is that there's no good road being constructed unlike here."

Co emphasized that the Misibis resort, though world-class in structure, is largely very Filipino in character. It particularly features Bicol's unique and natural beauty.

Said Co: "Of course, this project is a big gamble for us, since it must be noted that Bicol is the second most depressed region in the country. But for the sake of this God-given nature and its potentials, we're exhausting all our marketing resources and strategies to sell it and Bicol to the world."

He claimed that the project adheres to the principle of creating a balance between development and care for the environment.

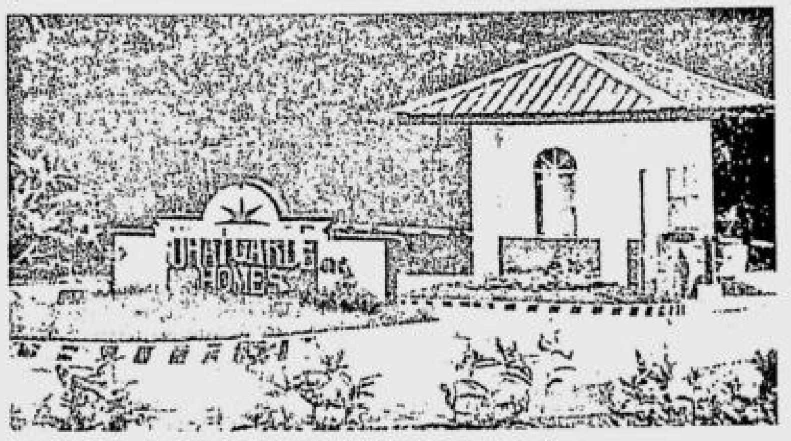
Most of the resort employees—architects, contractors and interior designers, though previously working abroad—are all Filipinos, and many of them are Bicolanos.

Only the toilet bowls, bathtubs, jacuzzis, tiles and the roofing of the villas and clusters were bought abroad—the rest in the Philippines.

"Mineral commodities like pebbles and crafted materials are local yet first-class and unique materials, to adopt to the discriminating tastes of tourists," Co said.

Buhai right-of-way payment claims still unpaid

By Jerry Esplanada



THE CONTROVERSIAL Buhai mass housing project

SOME Bulacan folk, particularly those in the sleepy barangay of Bangkal in Norzagaray town, however, have other things in mind aside from the outcome of the May 10 polls.

For instance, they say their claims for "Buhai project right-of-way payments" have remained unpaid for more than five years now.

"It seems our repeated demands for payment have fallen on deaf ears," barangay chair Marcelino Punzal has told the INQUIRER.

The claims, which totaled more than P10 million, cover pieces of Bangkal property supposedly used for the construction of the 8.67-kilometer access road to the controversial Buhai mass housing project of the Bulacan provincial government and the real estate firm Alto Projekt Asia.

The Buhai project site is perched on a remote hill chain in Norzagaray and Doña Remedios Trinidad.

Buhai, short for Bulacan Housing and Agro-Industrial Inc., is also marketed as Buhai Garden Homes.

Still validating claims

According to Punzal, they were "all in the dark about when or how this problem will finally be settled. How much longer are we going to wait?"

Said the barangay official: "The Buhai project coordinator who is based at the provincial capitol had earlier told us the funds intended for right-of-way claims were already with (Alto Projekt Asia). He gave us the impression the funds were ready for release."

Some claimants plan to "seek the help of North Luzon Railways Corp. (which is under the supervision of the Bases Conversion Development Authority)," donor of the 163-hectare Buhai project site.

Buhai, a pet project of Gov. Josefina de la Cruz, is the planned relocation site for some 10,000 families who will be displaced by the government's $503-million Northrail project.

Alto Projekt Asia president Dominador Tupaz Jr. had acknowledged the subject claims were the company's responsibility, but also pointed out they were "still validating" them.

Tupaz said it was necessary "because anybody can make a claim." But he failed to say how long it would take them to complete the validation process.

Buhai is the planned relocation site for some 10,000 families who will be displaced by the government's $503 million Northrail project

Portions of the Buhai access road have either cracked or caved in, noted Bangkal residents who also warned Buhai Garden Homes was sitting on "unstable ground."

Proponents have yet to put up another access road that would link Buhai with the nearby municipality of Doña Remedios Trinidad.

When interviewed, De la Cruz called the construction of the access road her "commitment to DRT." The town purportedly has jurisdiction over the Buhai project site.

"It will have to be a Class A road because it's part of our new township development program," said the governor.

Site development

Development of the Buhai site has been stalled a couple of times due to, among others, safety concerns raised by the Environmental Management Bureau and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, agencies attached to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Last month, the EMB briefly suspended the project's Environmental Compliance Certificate. It later gave the much-delayed project a go-ahead after getting a commitment from Buhai proponents to address those concerns.

EMB-Region 3, based in San Fernando City, Pampanga, earlier clarified that the ECC issued to Buhai in March 1999 covered only 9.9 hectares, not the entire 163-ha. project site.

Buhai's application for an amended ECC, filed on Dec. 29, 2000 and that would supposedly cover 60 ha., had been cancelled by EMB due to proponents' failure to submit several DENR requirements.

Potential risks

A DENR team earlier identified "potential risks in some portions of the area should the project be pursued."

EMB regional director Lormelyn Claudio, in a letter to the INQUIRER, referred to portions of Buhai Garden Homes that were "steep, mountainous and more than 18 degrees in slope."

MGB geologists, meanwhile, confirmed Norzagaray folk's claim that the project site was not an ideal, if not perfect location for a project of such magnitude.

To solve the problem, they recommended "engineering interventions." But "the mitigating measures will be very costly," noted MGB-Region 3 director Arnulfo Cabantog.

Food Central an ideal dining destination

AT THE NEW Food Central on the second floor of the three-level Edsa Central Pavilion, eating alone or in the company of friends or family is never a problem as the cool, comfortably spacious dining area is carefully designed for further enjoyment of various mouth-watering cuisine.

Satisfying the need for great food needn't bring one far away either. One of Mandaluyong City's landmark commercial centers continues to cater to different tastes after its grand makeover. The refurbished Edsa Central Pavilion offers a welcome alternative to the slew of malls that have multiplied all over Metro Manila in recent years. The shopping complex has changed and adapted to the times, now sporting a fresh new look that's conducive to an altogether different kind of enjoyment.

Continuous improvements

JJ Montinola, lease manager of its developer Greenfield Development Corp., shares that the changes Edsa Central has undergone entails continuous improvements for diners and shoppers alike.

"The new look suggests a spacious, cozy and quaint dining and shopping atmosphere that was inspired by our desire to veer from the current broad-market malls' look, which possesses narrow hallways, poor lighting and ventilation, subquality esthetics and crowded atmospheres."

Good product offerings

Greenfields continues to look for tenants who have unique concepts and a distinct array of products to offer the market. "As far as the Food Central is concerned, I should be able to tap tenants that are not found in other food courts, and have good product offerings at affordable prices." He also cites the stress-free atmosphere where people can meet up and unwind with good food, friendly service and a de-stressing ambience.

The tenants that are already fully operational in Food Central include Mongkok, Goto King, Sonyda Ichiban and Nacho King. These will be followed soon by Prospero's Shawarma, Samurai Foods, Ka Precy Lutong Bahay, Toto's Lechon Manok, Channel of Foods, Waffletime, Yog Fruit Bar, Bugnaw, Jack Frost, Hotdog Mania and Wonderbread. The clean, eye-catching Food Central wing also allows vantage points to watch concerts and performances at the first level, as well as a scenic view of the cityscape on its opposite side.

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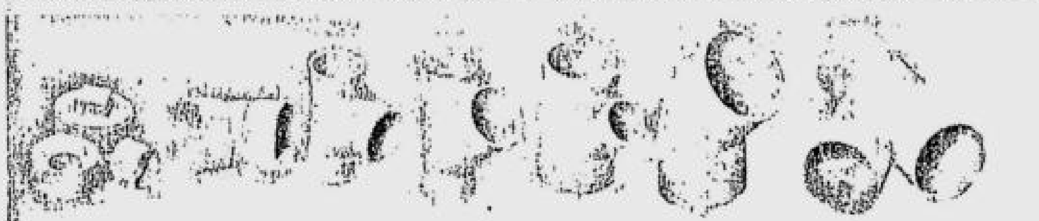

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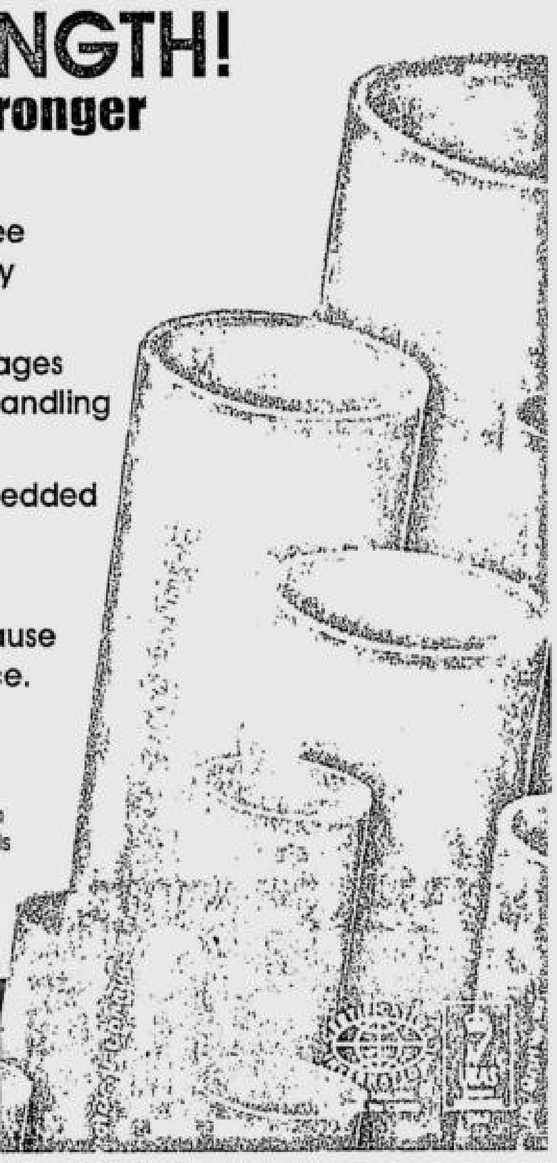

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NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of the Philippine National Bank will be held on May 25, 2004 at 8:00 a.m. at the Ballroom, Upper Lobby, Century Park Hotel, 599 Pablo Ocampo Sr. St., Malate, Manila.

The Agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Secretary's Proof of Notice and Quorum
3. Approval of the Minutes of the 2003 Annual Stockholders' Meeting held on May 27, 2003
4. Report of the President on the Results of Operations for the Year 2003
5. Approval of the 2003 Annual Report
6. Ratification of All Acts and Proceedings of the Board of Directors and Corporate Officers since the 2003 Annual Stockholders' Meeting
7. Election of Directors
8. Appointment of External Auditor
9. Other Matters
10. Adjournment

Minutes of the 2003 Annual Stockholders' Meeting as well as resolutions of the Board of Directors from May 27, 2003 will be available for examination during office hours at the Office of the Corporate Secretary.

Only stockholders of record as of April 26, 2004 will be entitled to notice of and vote at this meeting. Registration will begin at 6:00 a.m.

If you cannot personally attend the meeting, you may designate your authorized representative by submitting a **PROXY** to the Office of the Corporate Secretary not later than 5:00 p.m. on May 19, 2004. Any proxies so received will be validated on May 20, 2004, 9:30 a.m., at the Office of the Stock Transfer Agent at Allied Bank Center, 6754 Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

Pasay City, March 5, 2004

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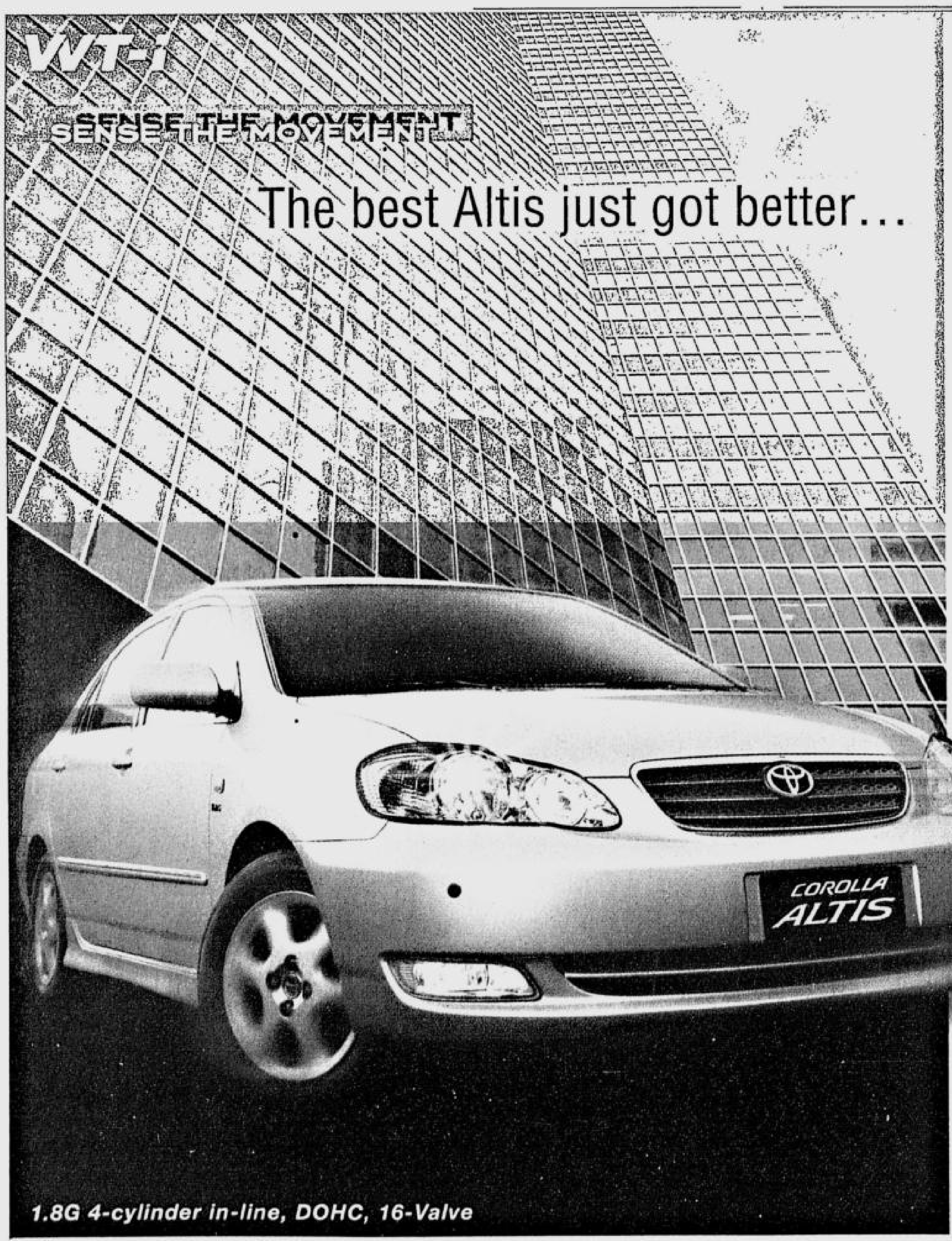

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1.8 VVT-i engine dramatically improves driving performance and fuel efficiency

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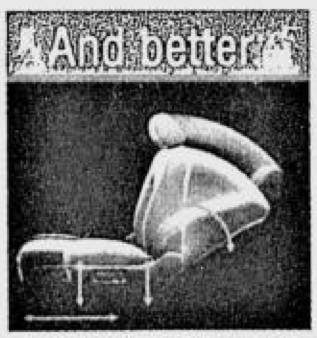
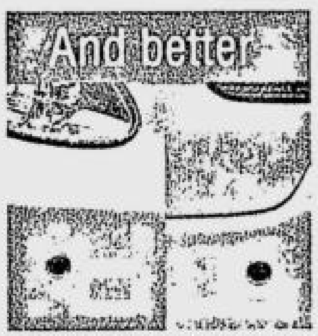


The Power driver's seat is 8-way adjustable for comfort



Equipped with corner and back-up sensors for easy parking

You move ahead of the times by taking the lead in setting new trends. You improve on your assets to keep you on top. Just like the ***New Corolla Altis 2004*** *with a high-performance* ***1.8 VVT-i engine.*** *It's equipped with a computer that matches the timing of valves to your driving situation. The result is greater pull, precise control, cleaner exhaust and better fuel efficiency.*

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BREASTMILK may influence baby's future diet /D1

LIFESTYLE

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Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

MONDAY **ARTS** ◉ TUESDAY **FITNESS** ● WEDNESDAY **2BU** ◉ THURSDAY **FOOD** ● FRIDAY **HOME & FASHION** ◉ SUNDAY **SURPRISES**

Fitness classes become more fun and exciting

LES Mills Body Pump—one of the most popular group classes at Fitness First

FITNESS and health are becoming major parts of today's lifestyles.

Gyms are the places people go to for help in developing healthy lifestyles. But it takes a lot of discipline to stick to a fitness program. So gyms offer group fitness classes to help keep people motivated to, at the very least, burn some calories.

At the Fitness First and Fitness First Plus, they also make sure classes are fun and exciting. The health clubs have been given the exclusive license to offer the world-famous Les Mills classes in the Philippines. Les Mills is the No. 1 company in developing fun fitness programs for groups.

Fitness First offers four Les Mills classes: Body Jam, Body Balance, Body Combat and Body Pump.

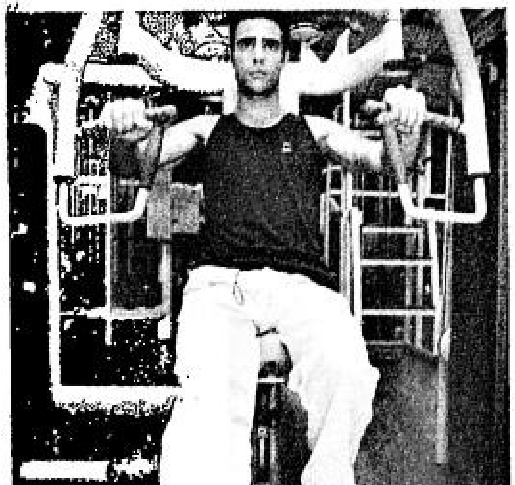
Funky hip-hop, Latin and other chart topping tunes provide the "soundtrack" for Body Jam, a fusion of aerobic moves and dance.

Body Pump, the most popular group fitness program in the world possibly because it's the fastest way to get into shape, involves lifting weights to strengthen, tone and define every muscle in the body.

For stress relief, the Body Combat combines moves from various disciplines like karate, tai chi, kickboxing and tae kwon do in a choreographed class. The Body Balance class helps achieve harmony and inner tranquility while toning and strengthening the body. Its core combines yoga, Pilates and other eastern disciplines to offer maximum benefits for body and soul.

Fitness First or Fitness First Plus has more details on Les Mills classes, as well as other group and individual exercise programs.

BODY Balance combines toning and strengthening while giving you a sense of harmony and tranquility.



HUNKY Alex Montez doing the chest press

FITNESS First country manager Andrew Phillips sweating it out on the treadmill

Summer at the Shang

The cool crowd is making it to the hot happenings at Shangri-La Plaza.

Weekend Streetscape Performances
Every Friday and Saturday, 9 pm to 12 midnight

Passage	May 14
D Soul	May 15
Orange & Lemons	May 21
Mulatto	May 22
Pido with Take One	May 28
Ad Lib St.	May 29

Acoustic Wednesdays at Streetscape

Dream Sequence	May 12
Vienna	May 12
Liquid Apples	May 26

Garden Court

Duncan Yoyo Clinics	May 15, 22 & 29
"People in Heritage" National Heritage Month Photo Exhibit by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts	May 9 - 14

Grand Atrium, Level 2

Magic of Hogwarts at the Shang!	May 28 - June 6

Level 3

Acoustic Performance by Strange Fruit	May 22

Level 4

Working Mom Magazine's 1st Working Mom of the the Year Award Launch and Digital Photo Exhibit	May 13 - 22

Art Plaza, Level 4

Future Arts Master Color Me Mine Exhibit & Ceramic Painting Demo	May 8 and 15
"Birthrite" An exhibit by Janice Liuson-Young at Gallery 828.	May 7 - 21

"Masterpieces"
An exhibit featuring Fernando Amorsolo, Miguel Zaragoza, Jorge Pineda, Onip Olmedo, Fernando Zobel, Juan Arellano and Jose Joya at Artistree.

Art Plaza Performances

Acoustic Perfection	May 16 and 23
Strange Fruit	May 29

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CLASSY mother and daughter—dazzling Mary and vivacious Marylou Prieto

VICKI'S HUNKS. Edward Mendez and Zaak Benitez

BELO'S TEAM. Laly Etroit and mega eye and throat specialist Dr. Victor Lopez

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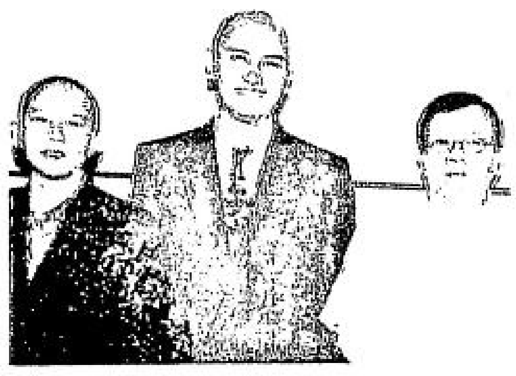
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WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

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Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** on **Kodak Max**

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HOTSHOTS. Manila Harbour Centre chair Reghis Romero II and Harbour Centre Port CEO Mikee Romero

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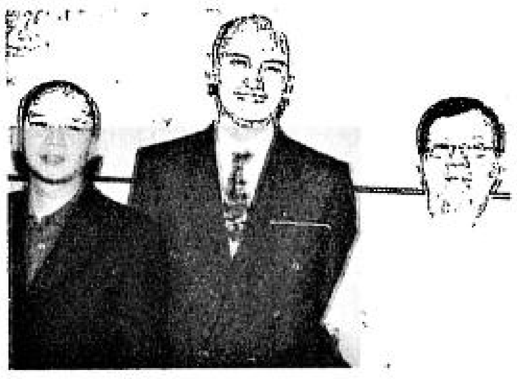
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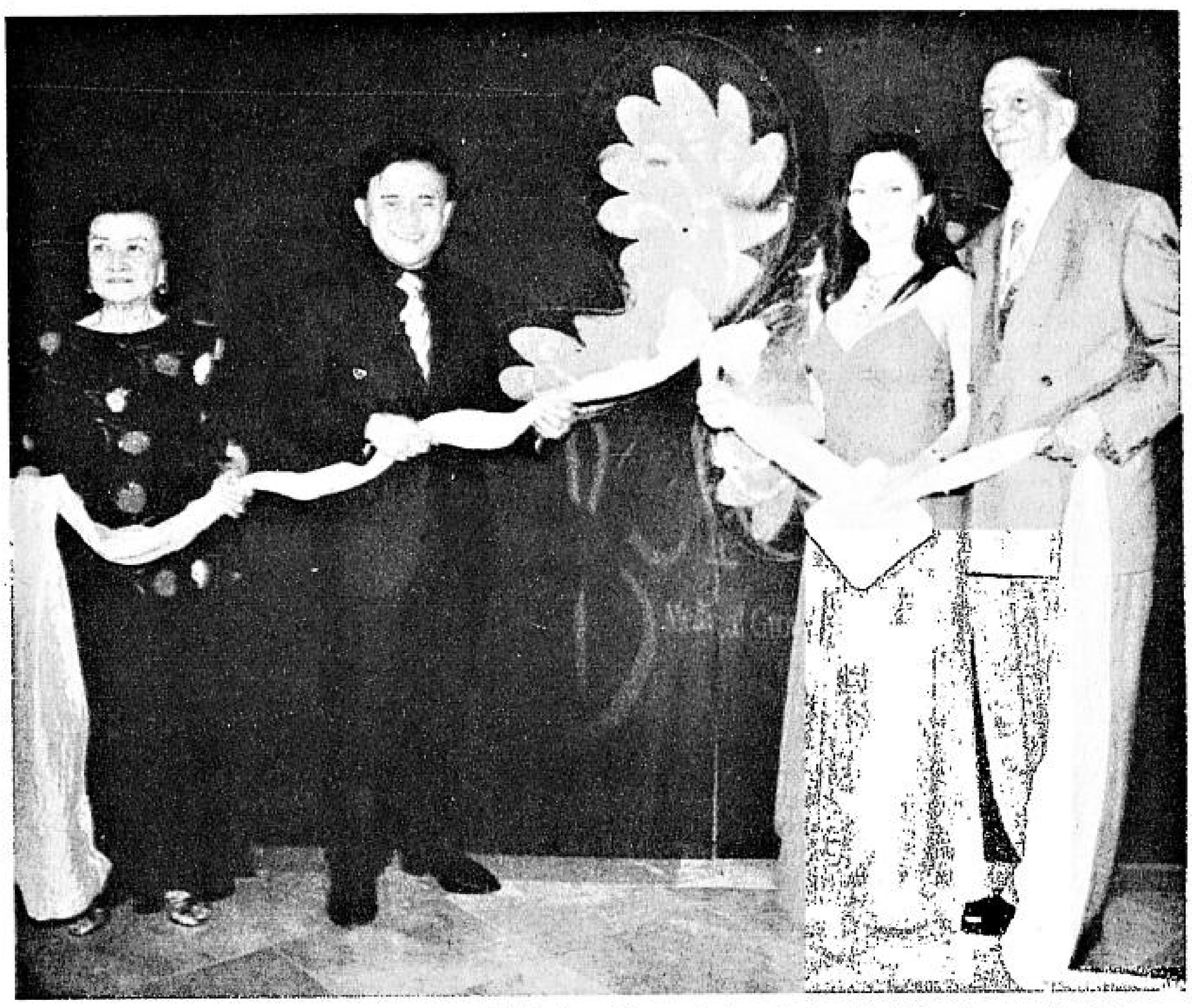
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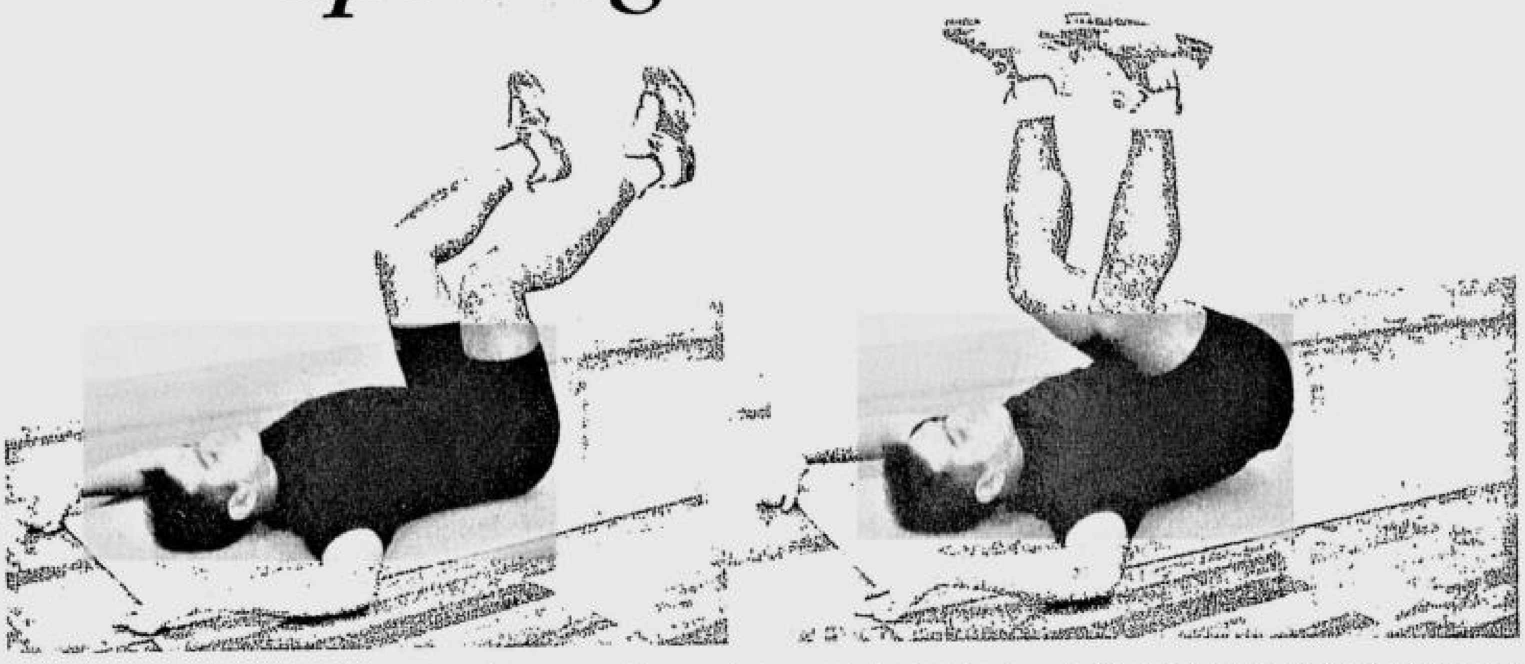
EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Open leg reverse curl



STRENGTHENS the front and sides of the abdominal muscles. This also challenges the abdominal muscles to contract from bottom up rather from the top down.

Exercise technique:

1. Lie on your back, elbows bent and in line with shoulders, forearms on the floor, palms up.

2. Keeping the buttocks on the floor, bend at the hips and knees, pointing knees out toward hands so your feet are up.

3. Squeezing your abdominal muscles, use two slow counts to smoothly curl your buttocks off the floor, keeping your knees pointing toward hands.

4. Hold this position for four slow counts, breathing the whole time.

5. Take two slow counts to lower your buttocks to the floor. Do not allow your legs to rock back and forth.

Performance tips:

1. This is an advanced exercise.

2. All the movement in this exercise is done in between your hip bones and ribcage. The legs should not be rocking back and forth.

3. Do not expect to lift the buttocks very high off the floor.

4. Move slowly. Avoid jerking the body to get the buttocks off the floor. Use the contraction in the abdominal muscles to do this.

5. If this bothers your lower back in any way, avoid this exercise.

6. As you get stronger, you can do this exercise with straight legs.

Repetitions:

Do eight repetitions—two counts slowly up, four counts hold, two counts slowly down. Rest. Do one more set.

It's camp season!

TAGAYTAY Highlands will hold its 5th Summer Camp May 15-16.

The camp will accept 30 participants, who will be divided into teams before they tackle different activities.

This year's program includes hiking across the Highlands' rugged terrain and art sessions.

Kids will also get to enjoy the Picture Riddle Race, a game that will require them to guess from pictures the exact location of particular spots within the complex.

In the two-year-old Amazing Camp Race, the campers will untie ropes, catch catfish in the pool, transport water through a hand-held aqueduct, build the highest tower using only the materials provided them, hit a target with plastic bags containing liquids of various colors, and find items scattered around the Country Club area. Completing the camp experience is a bonfire party.

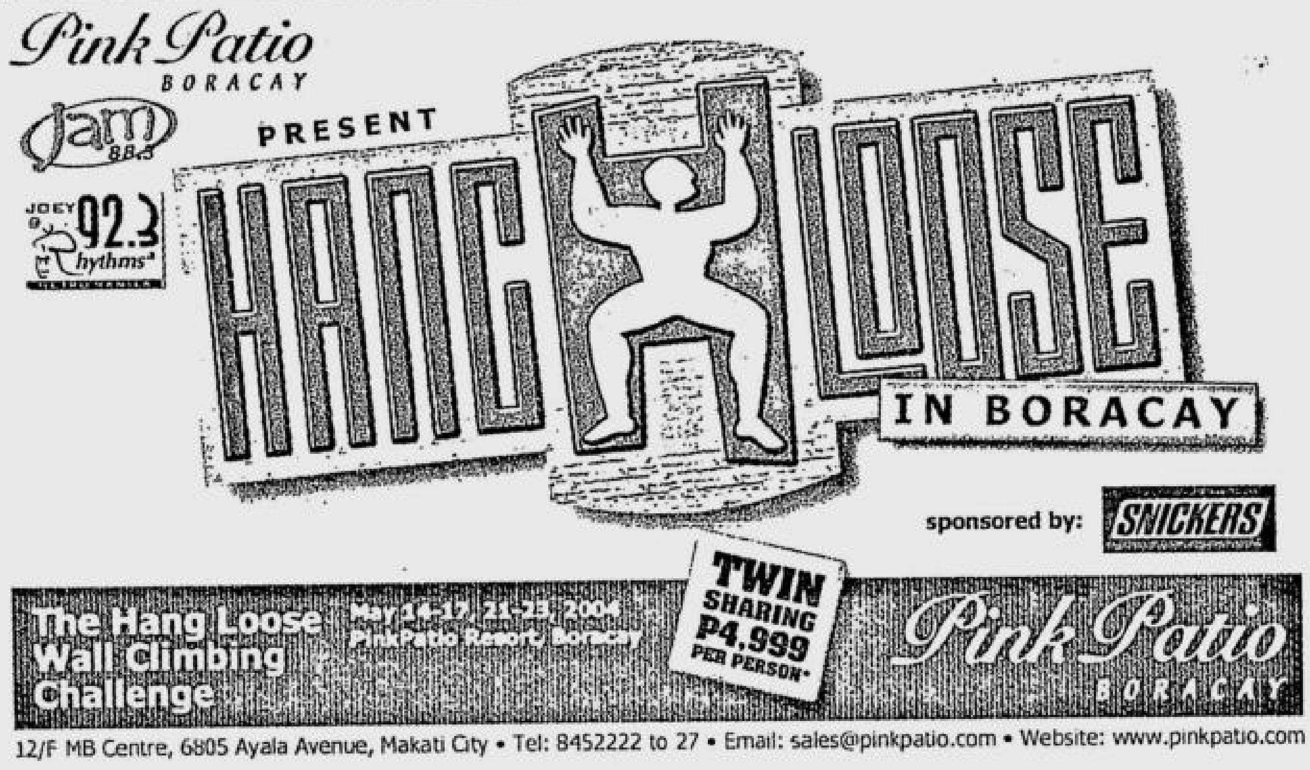
A dozen facilitators will help ensure order and safety.

Awards, the Team Campers of the Year and the Camper of the Year, will be given during the Grand Camper's Day which will cap the event.

Kids will show their parents what they learned at the camp, like building a fire and cooking an egg using only a string or paper bag.

The Summer Camp is exclusive to Highlands members and guests. Participants must be aged 7 to 12 years old.

Call 6872885 or (046) 4132033.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Rx MEDICard

Take Charge Doc!

Dr. Nicky S. Montoya

Take Charge Doc! kicks off its 4th year with a totally different concept. From the previous format of being a question and answer guide for members about MEDICard and its services, to an almanac of knowledge in healthcare.

The New Take Charge Doc! now features questions and answers about general health issues and illnesses answered through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. And in a common thrust with the campaigns of the government, your weekly healthcare guide parallels its features on the Calendar of Health Events of the Department of Health, featuring for this month of May an awareness campaign on Cervical Cancer.

How is cancer of the cervix diagnosed?

In the Philippines, cervical cancer is the most common type of gynecological cancer. At the Philippine General Hospital, there are 600 new cases administered per year. The exact etiology of cervical cancer is still unknown. However, there is now overwhelming evidence that Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) is the principal risk factor. Cervical cancer usually presents no symptoms at all, some patient may complain of post coital bleeding and as the lesion grows bigger more symptoms appear.

Papanicolau smear (Pap smear) is the BEST SCREENING test available to detect pre-malignant lesions of cervical cancer. It is economical, fast, painless and highly accurate. In case of an abnormal Pap smear, colposcopy with biopsy is the method of choice for evaluation of smears. The combination of Pap smear and colposcopy increases the accuracy of early cancer diagnosis. At present, HPV-DNA testing can identify women at risk of cervical cancer.

Prevention of cervical cancer depends on the identification of women at risk, early cancer screening and proper management of pre-malignant lesions.

Gynecologic Oncologist **DR. EDNA CARIÑO-BANTA** answers this week's featured question. Doktora Banta began her career in her field after being conferred Doctor of Medicine at Manila Central University. She later took specialization training for Obstetrics and Gynecology at the MCU Hospital and a subspecialty in Gynecological Oncology at the Philippine General Hospital. This mother of three has more than 18 years of clinical experience and has become affiliated with a number of specialty organizations: The Philippine Obstetrical and Gynecological Society, Society of Gynecologic Oncology of the Philippines, International Society of Gynecologic Endoscopy and the Philippine Society of Oncologists. For consultations, members may visit her clinic at Room 02 of the MCU-FDTMF Hospital located at Samson Road, Caloocan City, every Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 to 10 AM.

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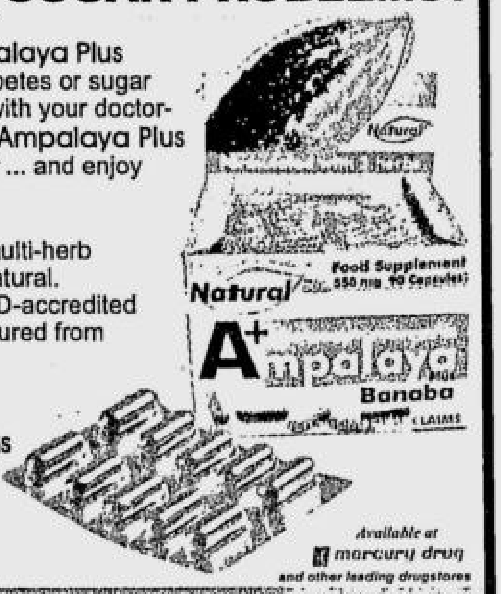

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Getting energized for the rat race

AlRodriguez

ILLSUTRATION: ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

AS a corporate athlete in the "rat race," you need to maximize your energy to perform at your best throughout the day. Performance psychologist Jim Loehr says, "It's not about the time you have to do your job, it's about the energy you bring to the time you have."

In his book, "The Power of Full Engagement," Loehr outlines energy-enhancing strategies he has successfully used with clients like Motorola and PepsiCo.

Get enough sleep

Loehr says many business people sleep only four to five hours a day. They are so used to this they think it is normal.

According to Loehr, studies have shown that mental performance—reaction time, concentration, memory and logical/analytical reasoning—declines dramatically when a person lacks sleep.

The average adult needs eight hours of sleep. Some people need a little more while others need a little less. Sleep experts say you are getting enough if you can wake up without an alarm clock, aren't sleepy during the day and have no difficulty falling asleep at night.

But you have to sleep at the right time for performance to be maximized. Loehr says studies found that night shift workers—people who work at night—have twice the number of highway accidents as day workers. They also have more on-the-job mishaps. "The longer, more continuously, and later at night you work, the less efficient and more mistake-prone you become," he says.

If you have to work at night or if the job deprives you of sleep, Loehr recommends "strategic napping." He cites the work of researcher Claudio Stampi who found that 20-, 30-minute naps every four hours allowed sleep-deprived workers to maintain a high level of alertness and productivity over a 24-hour period.

Loehr also mentions the Fatigue Counter Measures of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, which found that a 40-minute nap improved performance by 34 percent and alertness by 100 percent. But napping for more than 40 minutes will only make you feel more fatigued.

Eat breakfast every day

Loehr says, "Eating breakfast is critically important. It not only increases blood glucose levels (after several hours without food), but also jump-starts metabolism."

He recommends foods that are low in the glycemic scale (a measure of how fast sugar in food is released into the bloodstream) to provide slow-release and long-lasting energy. Examples are whole grains, proteins and most fruits.

High glycemic foods include those made of refined flour and sugar like sugary cereals, white bread, muffins and doughnuts. They will "spike energy for short periods but prompt a crash in as few as 30 minutes."

Eat 5-6 small meals daily

How often people eat also influences their capacity to stay fully engaged and to sustain high performance. Five to six low-calorie, highly nutritious meals a day ensures a steady resupply of energy. Not even the most energy-rich foods can fuel high performance in the four to eight hours between meals.

Eat only as much as you need

Loehr explains, "Sustained performance depends not just on eating at regular intervals but also on eating only as much as you need to drive your energy for the next two to three hours. Portion control is critical both in managing weight and in regulating energy."

Snacks between meals should be 100-150 calories and should involve low glycemic foods like nuts, sunflower seeds, fruits or half a 200-calorie energy bar.

Drink 48-64 ounces of water daily

Loehr believes drinking water is perhaps the most undervalued source of physical energy renewal. Inadequate hydration compromises concentration and coordination. After all, the brain is 75 percent water. The volume 48-64 ounces is equivalent to six to eight glasses of water or three to four bottles of 500 ml bottled water.

Take breaks every 90 minutes during work

According to Loehr, "Somewhere between 90 and 120 minutes, the body begins to crave a period of rest and recovery. Signals include a desire to yawn and stretch, hunger pangs, increased tension, difficulty concentrating, an inclination to procrastinate or fantasize, and a higher incidence of mistakes."

He recommends renewing your energy with 5-, 10-minute breaks of total disengagement. Try sitting still and focusing on your breath—inhale for three and exhale for six.

He adds, "Deep, smooth and rhythmic breathing is simultaneously a source of energy, alertness and focus as well as of relaxation, stillness and quiet."

Exercise

You need to be physically tough to face challenging and stressful situations even if stress only comes from irate clients. The body responds to stress, real or imagined, physical or mental, in the same way—the "flight-or-fight" response. Cardiovascular and strength exercises "toughen" your system to handle stress.

Loehr recommends at least two cardiovascular interval workouts and two strength-training workouts per week.

Interval training alternates brief periods of high-intensity exercise with low-intensity recovery periods. You can climb stairs for 60-90 seconds then march in place for 1-2 minutes to recover. Or walk as fast as you can then walk slowly to recover. Repeat for as many times as needed to complete your workout.

Loehr favors interval training over steady-state aerobics (maintaining the same intensity throughout the workout) because people can do a greater amount of exercise without "killing" themselves. They can recover between short high-intensity periods.

More on interval training next week.

For past articles/exercises and to suggest topics for future columns, visit www.tinajuanfitness.info.

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Breastfeeding moms may be charting babies' future diets

Food preferences in adulthood are developed as early as infancy

By Linda B. Bolido

MOTHERS have yet another reason to breastfeed. They will not only make their infants healthier but they may also be setting them on the right diet path in adulthood.

Studies conducted by Dr. Julie Mennella, a biopsychologist and researcher at the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia, a basic research institute, tend to show that mothers may be able to influence their children's food preferences and tastes from as early as infancy.

Mennella found that this was particularly true for breastfeeding mothers. It seems that breast milk, established as the superior food for infants, allows children not just to bond closely with their mothers and share the parents' built-in protection against diseases but also to "inherit" their food preferences.

Mennella and colleagues found that breastfed infants learned to accept and prefer the flavors of their mothers' diets, which were transmitted through breast milk.

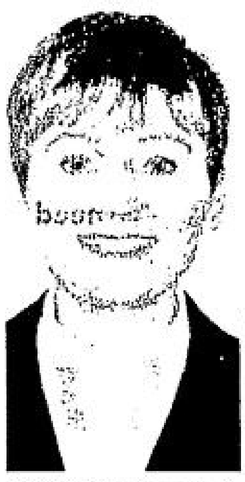
Women who breastfeed their children to give them a good nutritional foundation early in life, may be unknowingly undermining their own efforts by not exercising care in their own food choices.

'Magical time'

Mennella's team found that children began to develop taste preferences as early as 3-4 months of age, a period the researcher described as "a pretty magical time." What children would prefer later in life was very dependent on what they were fed during early infancy.

Mennella said, "Some of these flavor experiences during the first years of life are impacting on preferences later in life."

While genetics plays a role in taste preferences, Mennella's research suggests exposure and environment also count. Mennella said many memories of smell and flavor were formed early in life. "I think that it is some of these experiences occurring during infancy and early childhood that define comfort food for us," she added.



NUTRITION expert Paula J. Ziegler

Feeding survey

Dr. Paula J. Ziegler, manager for nutrition sciences of Gerber, cited Mennella's findings to emphasize the significance of the results of the Feeding Infants and Toddlers Survey (Fits). Both underscore the need for parents and caregivers to be more discerning in what they feed young children.

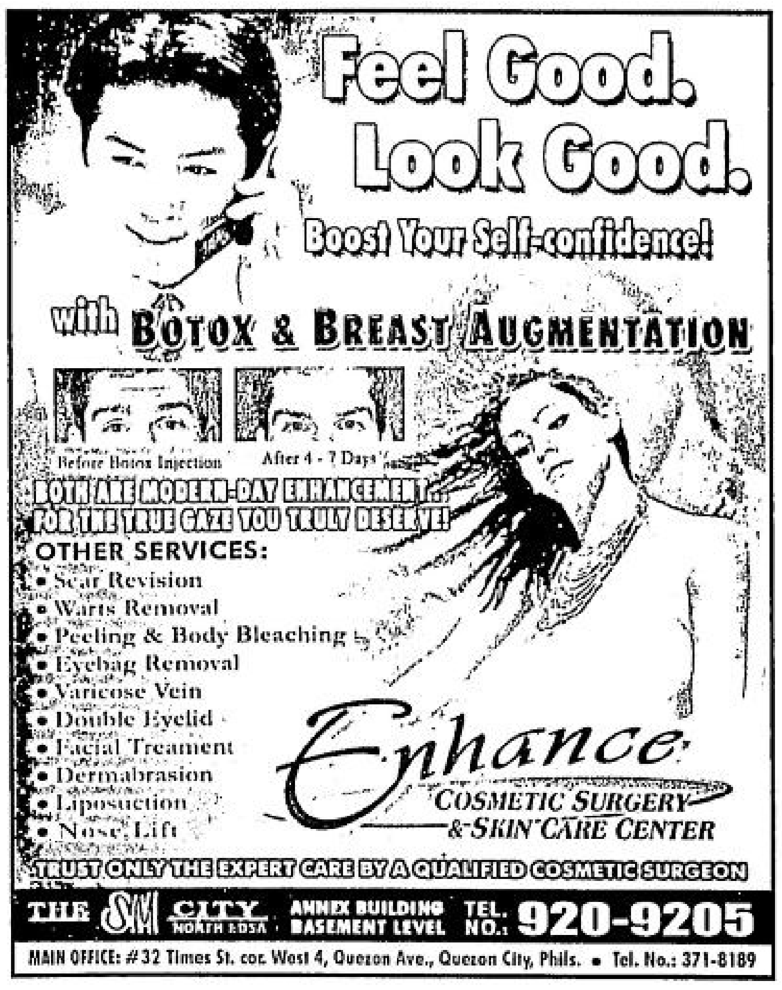
Fits was undertaken by Gerber Products Company, the baby food manufacturer, in an effort to understand the food and nutrient intakes of American children 4-24 months of age. The survey covered more than 3,000 children.

Ziegler presented some of Fits highlights during a media briefing arranged by Novartis Healthcare Philippines, local maker of the baby food.

While the survey involved American children, it carries lessons for Filipino parents and caregivers. In fact, some findings of the survey may be starting to be seen in the Philippines: 25-30 percent of 9-24-month old kids do not eat any fruit, 20-25 percent do not eat any vegetables, low nutrient foods-soda, hotdogs, salty snacks and French fries-enter the diets of children at very early ages.

As Mennella found, food and flavor preferences, as well as eating habits, are learned very early and often become life-long practices. Improper diet and nutritional imbalances in young children could translate later in life into iron deficiency, obesity or overweight and chronic diseases like heart

BREASTFEEDING/ D3



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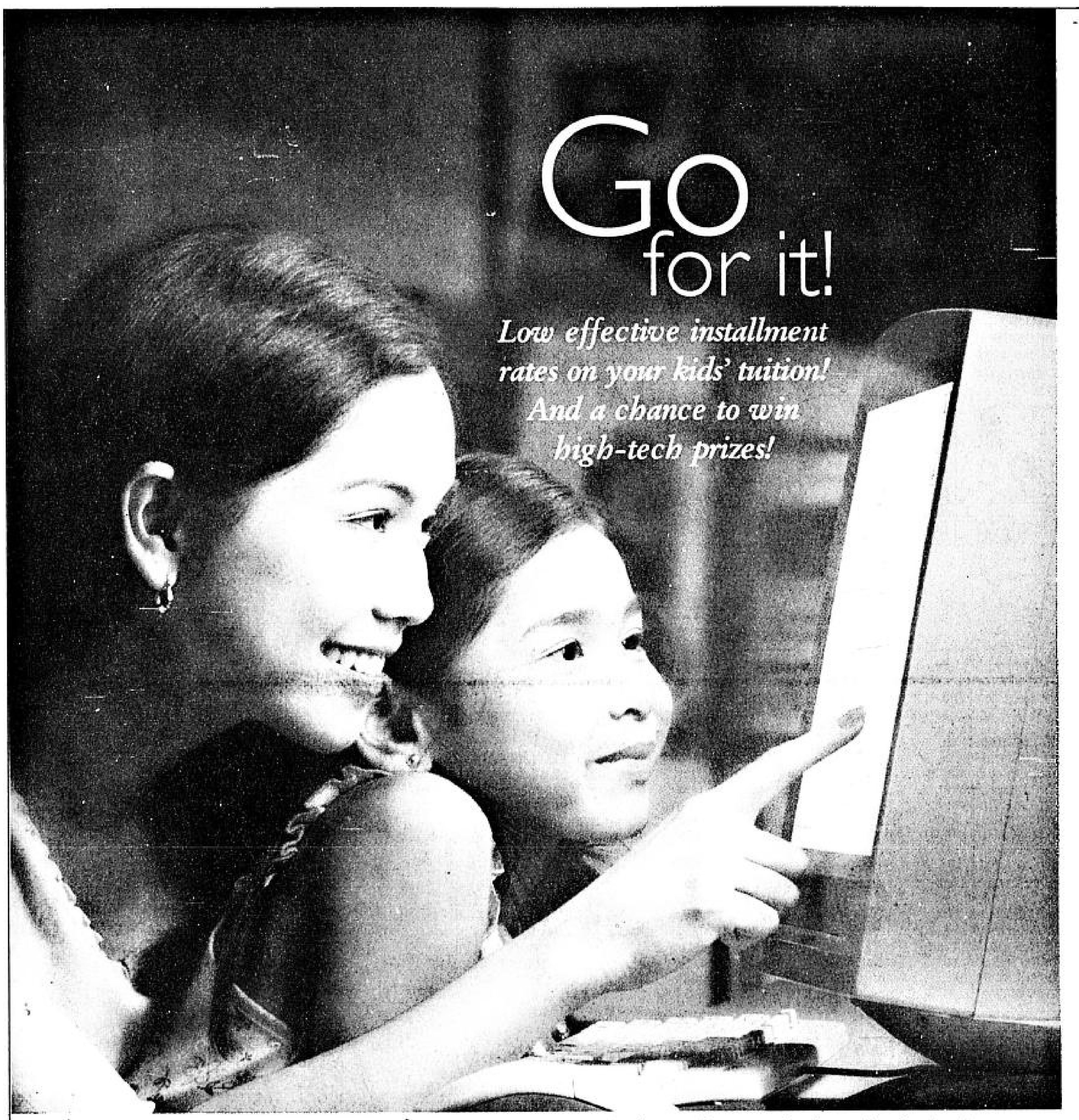

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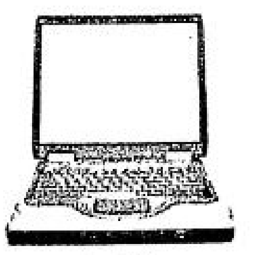

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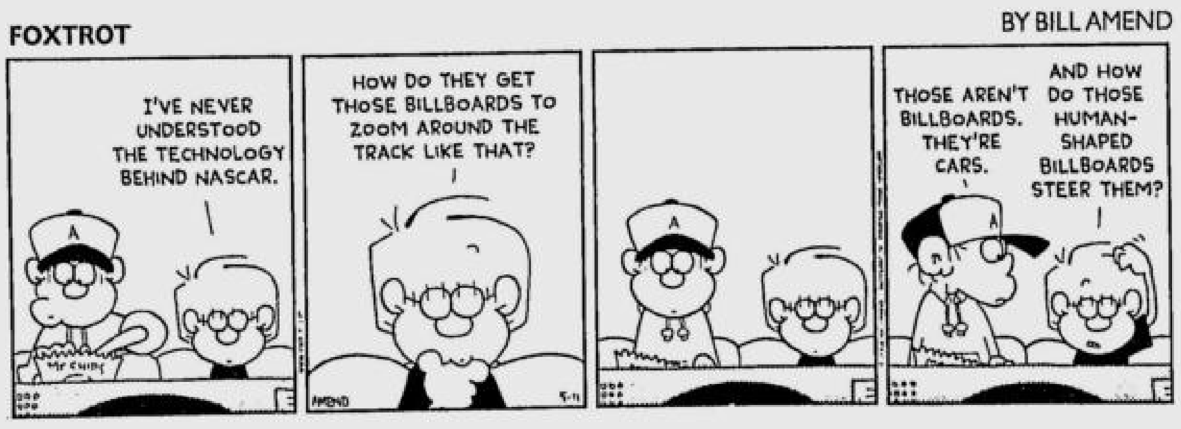
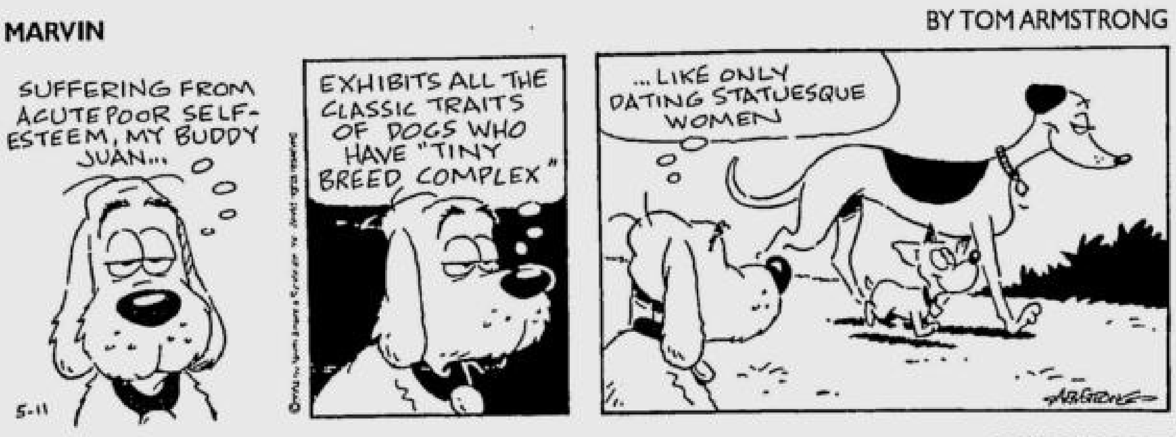
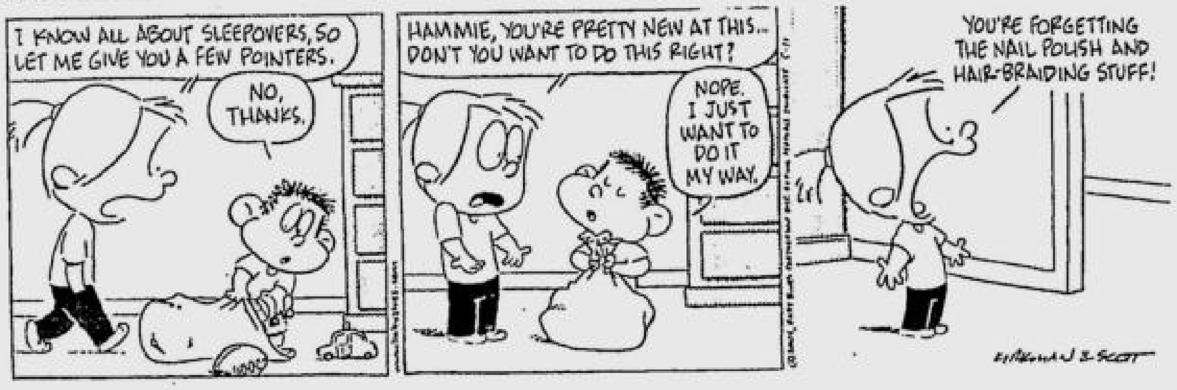

I'VE NEVER UNDERSTOOD THE TECHNOLOGY BEHIND NASCAR.
HOW DO THEY GET THOSE BILLBOARDS TO ZOOM AROUND THE TRACK LIKE THAT?
THOSE AREN'T BILLBOARDS. THEY'RE CARS.
AND HOW DO THOSE HUMAN-SHAPED BILLBOARDS STEER THEM?

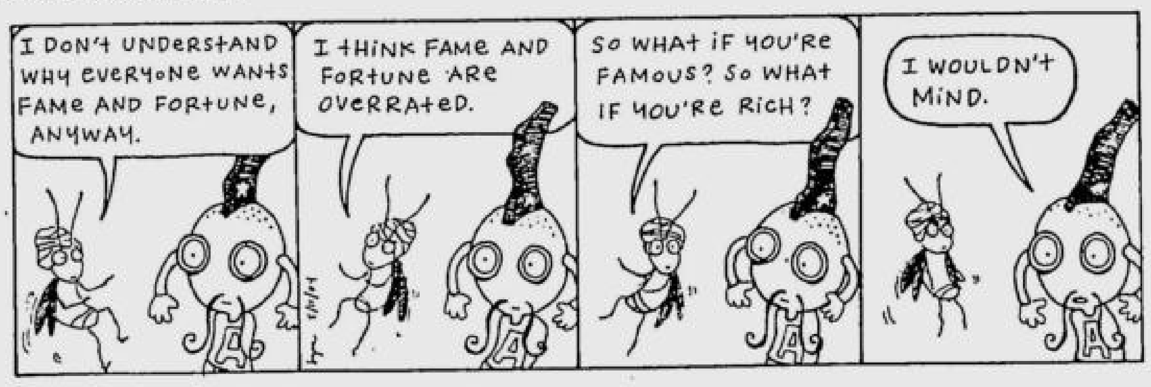
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


SUFFERING FROM ACUTE POOR SELF-ESTEEM, MY BUDDY JUAN...
EXHIBITS ALL THE CLASSIC TRAITS OF DOGS WHO HAVE "TINY BREED COMPLEX"
...LIKE ONLY DATING STATUESQUE WOMEN
5-11

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


I KNOW ALL ABOUT SLEEPOVERS, SO LET ME GIVE YOU A FEW POINTERS.
NO, THANKS.
HAMMIE, YOU'RE PRETTY NEW AT THIS... DON'T YOU WANT TO DO THIS RIGHT?
NOPE. I JUST WANT TO DO IT MY WAY.
YOU'RE FORGETTING THE NAIL POLISH AND HAIR-BRAIDING STUFF!

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY EVERYONE WANTS FAME AND FORTUNE, ANYWAY.
I THINK FAME AND FORTUNE ARE OVERRATED.
SO WHAT IF YOU'RE FAMOUS? SO WHAT IF YOU'RE RICH?
I WOULDN'T MIND.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're highly creative, fun-lovingand imaginative. You have a very original way of seeing the world. Some make the mistake of not taking you seriously. Your gift of fantasy puts you at the head of the pack. You might become a legend in your own time. You must work very hard this year for rewards in 2005. **Birthdate of:** Natasha Richardson, actress; Salvador Dali, surrealist artist; Martha Graham, choreographer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Most of us take our daily contacts for granted; however, we do care. Choose today to tell others how much you love them. Don't leave it up to their imagination.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You adore beautiful things! This afternoon is not a good time to shop. Wait until tomorrow, or better yet, Saturday. Then you can buy goodies for yourself and loved ones.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): With Venus in your sign now, you find it easy to be diplomatic, charming and friendly to everyone. (Now is the time to settle problems with others.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): With Mars in your sign, you have an extra buildup of energy within you. Physical exercise will help you blow off some of this steam, because it will build up within you!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Friendships are especially important to you now. Make time to socialize more than usual. Accept all invitations with gracious delight.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): It's very easy to make a good impression on important people now. Use this to your advantage in any way that you can. Talk to bosses, VIPs, parents and teachers.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Because your appreciation of beauty is heightened now, give yourself an opportunity to enjoy the arts or any kind of culture around you. Take a drive in the country if you can.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Someone might offer you a gift. If so, by all means, accept! Do not refuse out of pride, distrust or shyness. Give others a chance to be generous.

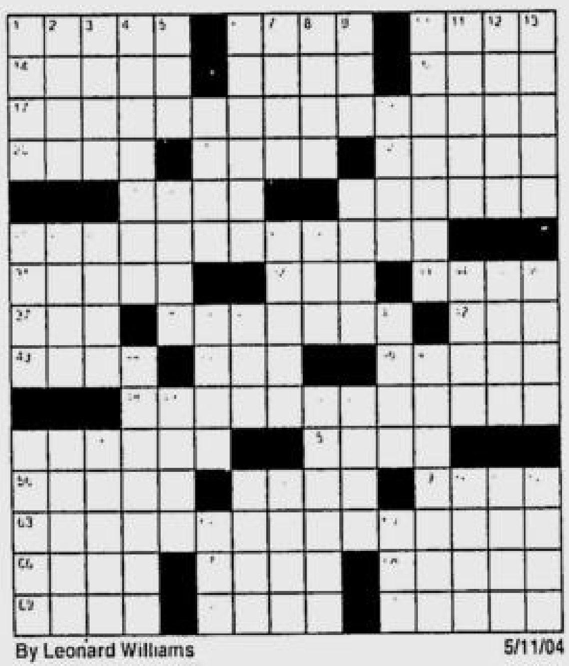
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): With Venus opposite your sign, this is the perfect time to smooth over troubled waters. Discuss problems with partners. Look for a win/win solution.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Co-workers are especially cooperative now. If there are changes you want to introduce to your job, this is the week to do it. Things will fall easily into place.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): New love, casual flirtations or a deepening of existing relationships is possible now. You feel friendly and lighthearted toward everyone. Enjoy your life!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Make plans to beautify where you live. Make changes at home. Buy something new that pleases you. You might buy a treat for a family member.

DAILY CROSSWORD

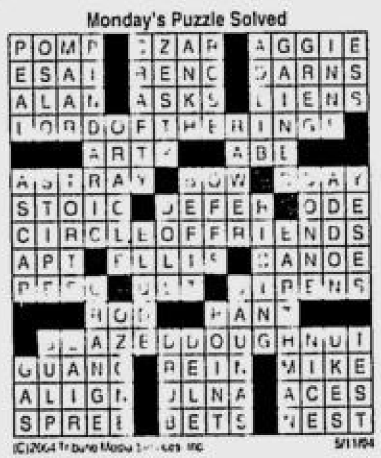


By Leonard Williams
North Manchester, IN
5/11/04

ACROSS
1 Dos
6 Golf hazard
10 Brit's streetcar
14 Agassi of tennis
15 Helper
16 Actress Skye
17 Research effort
20 Fair-hiring agcy.
21 "Rhyme Pays" rapper
22 Borden's spokes-cow
23 Former NYC mayor Ed
25 More old hat
26 Manhattan neighborhood
31 Mr. Saarinen
32 Tic-tac-toe win
33 Actor Richard
37 Johannesburg's nation: abbr.
38 Add an audio track
42 Drink for two?
43 Actress Moore
45 End of command?
46 Actor Ed
48 New York City showplace
52 AWOL part
55 Flatten
56 Dreary
57 Pipe part
59 Greek letters
63 Department store floor
66 Brink
67 Slant
68 A votre __!
69 Gets the point
70 Nashville venue
71 David of CNN

DOWN
1 Perry Mason story
2 As soon as
3 Personal prefix
4 Sun spot?
5 Bigwig in D.C.
6 Self-defense system
7 Rampant
8 Mine entrance
9 Chest muscle, for short
10 Naming
11 Drive (out)
12 Actress MacDowell
13 Author of "The Monk's Wedding"
18 Lyme-disease carrier
19 Bone-dry
24 Scandinavian capital
25 Old pronoun
26 Group of gnus
27 Otherwise
28 O'Flaherty or Neeson
29 Yankee manager Joe
30 Grand Banks fish
34 Sicilian volcano
35 Totter
36 Noble title
39 TV control selection
40 Bard's contraction
41 Joan of folk
44 Frozen periods
47 WWII tank
49 Singer Paul
50 Oily
51 Science Diet competitor
52 French priests
53 Paddle part
54 Worsted fabric
57 Cut short
58 Skier's lift
60 Lobster moms
61 Suspicious of
62 Gang follower?
64 Nigerian people
65 Language suffix

Monday's Puzzle Solved



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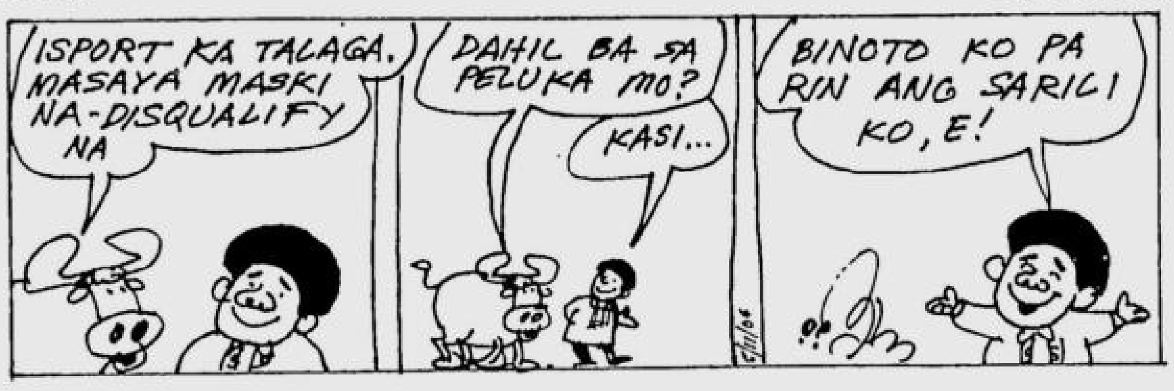
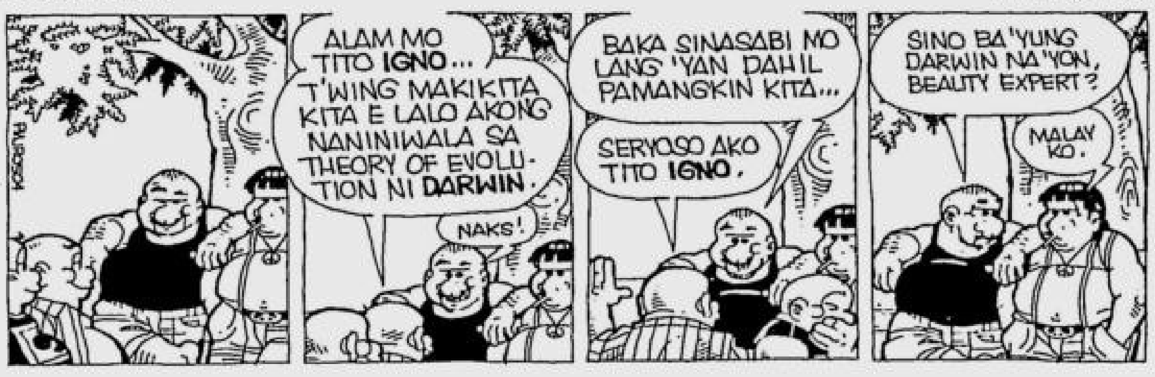
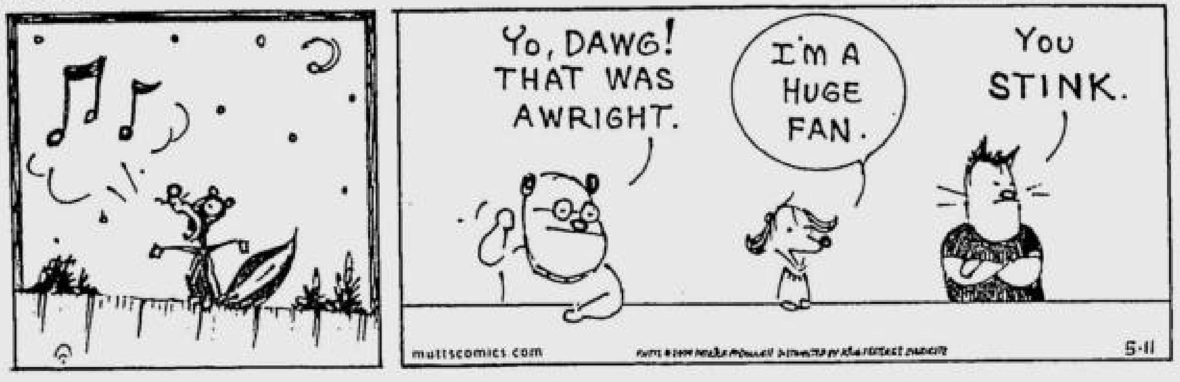
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


ISPORT KA TALAGA. MASAYA MASKI NA-DISQUALIFY NA
DAHIL BA SA PELUKA MO?
KASI...
BINOTO KO PA RIN ANG SARILI KO, E!

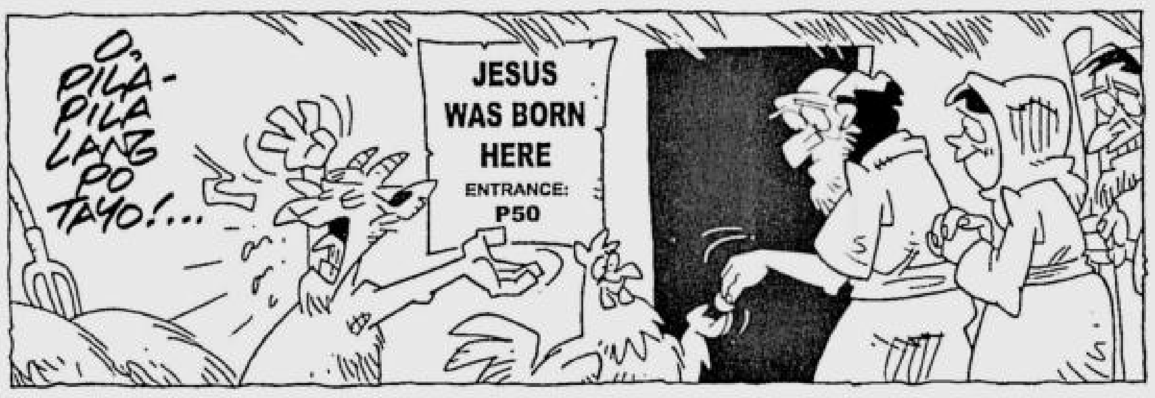
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


ALAM MO TITO IGNO... T'WING MAKIKITA KITA E LALO AKONG NANINIWALA SA THEORY OF EVOLUTION NI DARWIN.
NAKS!
BAKA SINASABI MO LANG 'YAN DAHIL PAMANGKIN KITA...
SERYOSO AKO TITO IGNO.
SINO BA 'YUNG DARWIN NA 'YON, BEAUTY EXPERT?
MALAY KO.

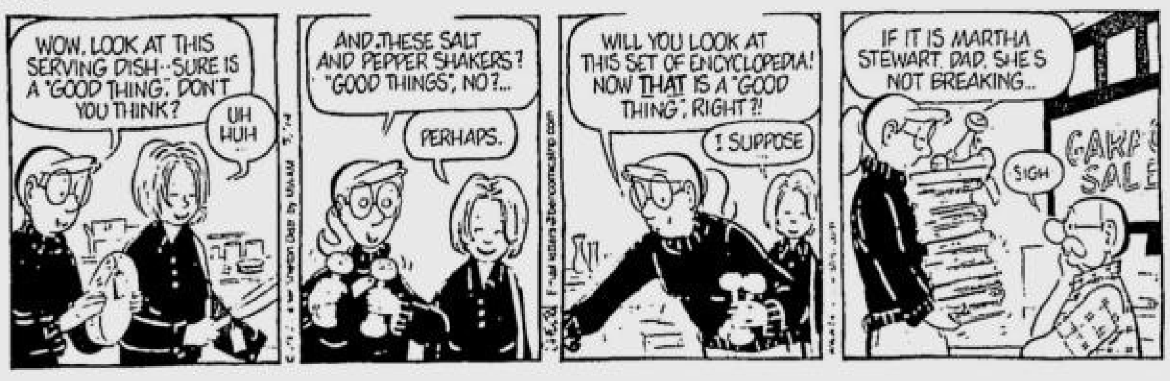
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


YO, DAWG! THAT WAS AWRIGHT.
I'M A HUGE FAN.
YOU STINK.
muttscomics.com
5-11

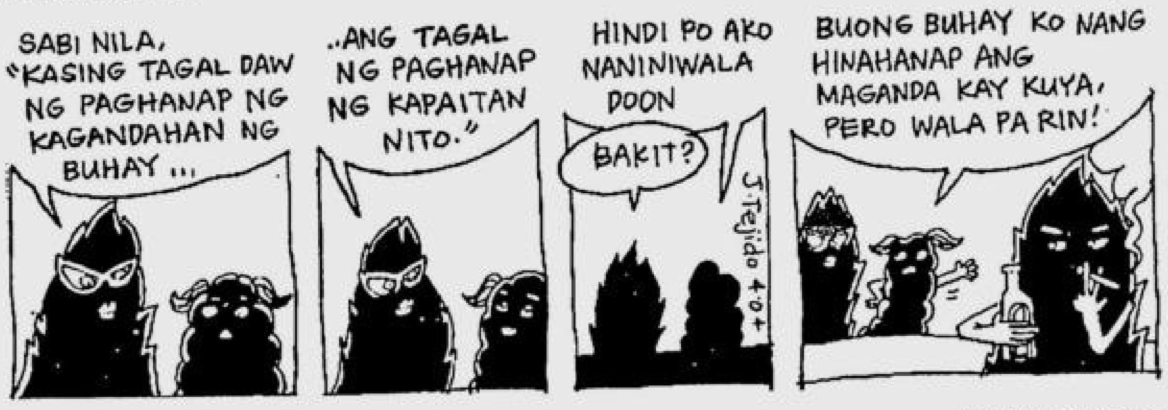
DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


O, PILA-PILA LANG PO TAYO!...
JESUS WAS BORN HERE
ENTRANCE: P50

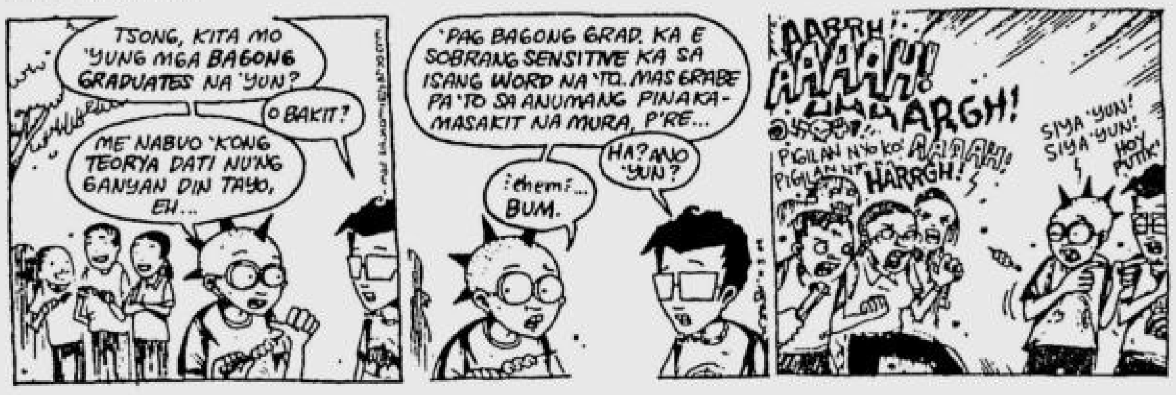
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


WOW, LOOK AT THIS SERVING DISH--SURE IS A "GOOD THING," DON'T YOU THINK?
UH HUH
AND THESE SALT AND PEPPER SHAKERS? "GOOD THINGS", NO?...
PERHAPS.
WILL YOU LOOK AT THIS SET OF ENCYCLOPEDIA! NOW THAT IS A "GOOD THING", RIGHT?!
I SUPPOSE
IF IT IS MARTHA STEWART, DAD, SHE'S NOT BREAKING...
SIGH
GARAGE SALE

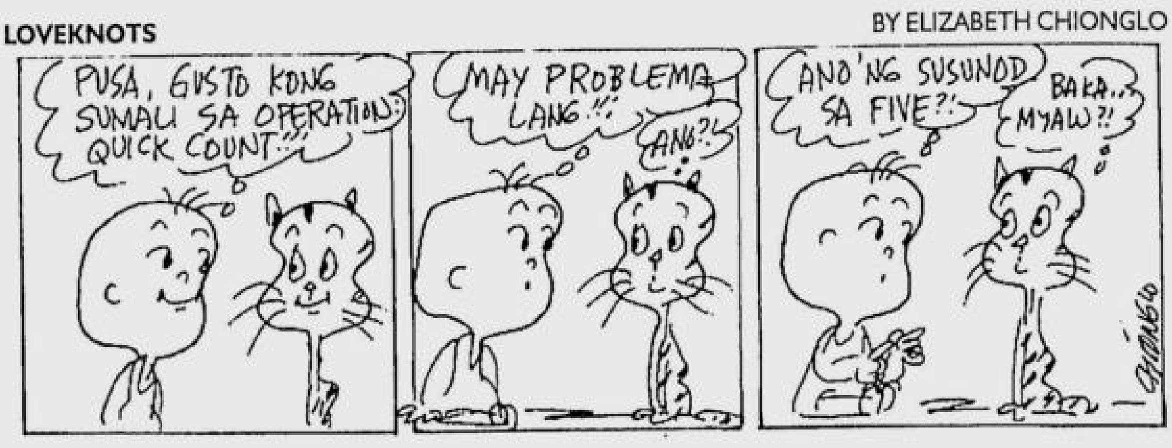
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


SABI NILA, "KASING TAGAL DAW NG PAGHANAP NG KAGANDAHAN NG BUHAY...
..ANG TAGAL NG PAGHANAP NG KAPAITAN NITO."
HINDI PO AKO NANINIWALA DOON
BAKIT?
BUONG BUHAY KO NANG HINAHANAP ANG MAGANDA KAY KUYA, PERO WALA PA RIN!

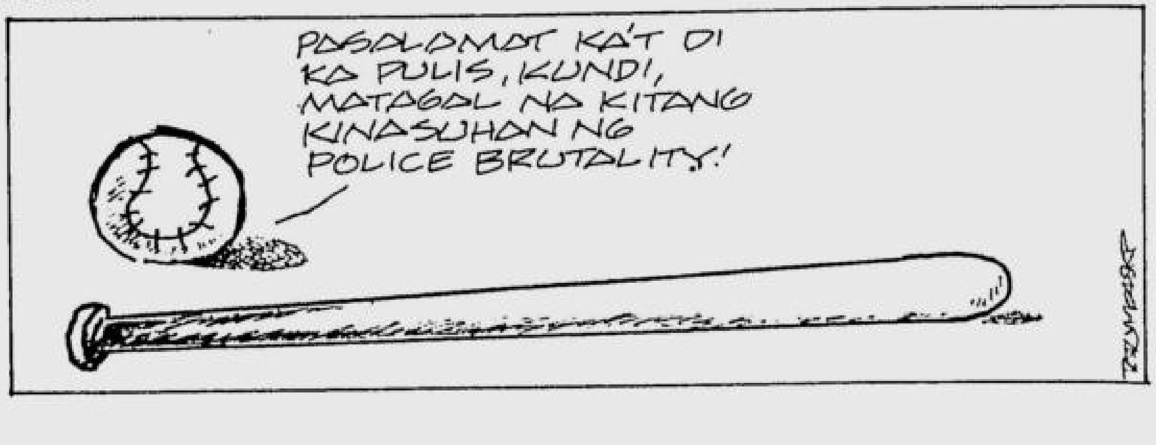
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


TSONG, KITA MO 'YUNG MGA BAGONG GRADUATES NA 'YUN?
O BAKIT?
ME' NABUO 'KONG TEORYA DATI NU'NG GANYAN DIN TAYO, EH...
'PAG BAGONG GRAD. KA E SOBRANG SENSITIVE KA SA ISANG WORD NA 'TO. MAS GRABE PA 'TO SA ANUMANG PINAKA-MASAKIT NA MURA, P'RE...
:ehem:... BUM.
HA? ANO 'YUN?
AARRH!! AAAAH! UHHHARGH! PIGILAN NYO KO! AAAAH! HARRGH!
SIYA 'YUN! SIYA 'YUN!
HOY PUTIK!

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


PUSA, GUSTO KONG SUMALI SA OPERATION: QUICK COUNT!!
MAY PROBLEMA LANG!!
ANO?!
ANO'NG SUSUNOD SA FIVE?!
BAKA.. MYAW?!

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


PASALAMAT KA'T DI KA PULIS, KUNDI, MATAGAL NA KITANG KINASUHAN NG POLICE BRUTALITY!

‘Blessing’ leaves strange marks

Part 5

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

THERE is more than meets the eye in the dangerous blessing (*basbas*) practiced by the Haring Bakal group. According to blessor Jesus Verallo Jr. or Utol Jess, "There are many mysterious forces that go into an initiate's body" during the process. And I witnessed some of them.

Let's take the case of the hematoma or welts that appeared on the body after the hacking. It is quite normal and expected that the skin will swell or have marks due to clotting of the blood when the body is hit by a hard object. What was strange was the marks sometimes appeared in places where they should not be.

Utol Jess himself told a remarkable story that happened many years ago. A woman who was four months pregnant insisted on being blessed. Utol Jess obliged and hacked her three times on the stomach. When the baby was born, it had hematoma marks on its stomach, too! Even Utol Jess could not explain how or why this happened.

The hematoma marks on my thigh appeared prominently behind, rather than in front, which was struck by the sword.

I've been told that's not so strange because, medically, there are cases where a person may be struck by a hard object on the left side of the head but the hematoma marks appear on the right side.

However, in the case of my marks, what was strange was this: Utol Jess struck my thigh hard three times while he was standing on my right and holding the blade straight forward, producing red horizontal lines (from my view point) immediately afterward, which was normal.

What was not normal was the fact that the large hematoma marks behind my thigh were vertical (in relation to me). In other words, the marks behind were perpendicular to the marks in front, instead of parallel as would be expected. It was as if the direction of the force changed 45 degrees as it went inside my thigh. No similar mark appeared behind my stomach, though.

Romy Macapagal also had marks on his thigh opposite where the sword struck but the pattern was different from mine.

It seems that everybody experiences the phenomenon differently. Some do not even have any clearly visible hematoma afterward, as in the case of my wife. It was not because the force applied on her was less than that on our other women companions like Ellen Sara and Dr. Helen de Garriz. The two women had pretty ugly marks on their thighs and stomachs.

One question was bugging my mind. If what hit our bodies was not hard metal but energy, why would it create such ugly hematoma marks that could only be produced if the body was hit hard by a hard, blunt object or instrument? And why did the blow hurt as much as being struck by a physical object?

When I asked Utol Jess how he would explain the mysterious things we witnessed in his place, he replied: "It is very difficult to explain things that are pertaining to heaven. God knows everything that man is thinking, but what God is thinking only He knows. The effects of His spirit and power, however, are very strong. They envelop our whole being and the fact that we have goose pimples is proof of that power."

The dangerous initiation rite involving hacking with a sharp object or sword is like an immunization shot, which activates antibodies to fight invading organisms. The effects of the initiation, according to Jess Verallo, are: protection not only against knife, bolos and bullets but also against *kulam* (or witchcraft and hexes) and even accidents.

We could hardly believe all the stories they told us as proof of all this. But then not one of us was willing to test its effectiveness. It will work automatically when attacked or when our life is put in danger, according to them.

Next week, part 6: Ang Suh explains the initiation rites

Listen to to my dzMM radio program every Sunday, 7-8:30 p.m.

FREE SWIMMING LESSONS
Speedo's VP operations Manish C. Mahtani turns over the basic swimming kit required for the lessons to Bert Lozada Swim School president Bert Lozada before Speedo's Cecille Asuncion and Emmy Buccat and BLSS's Anthony and Angelo Lozada. A minimum purchase of P5,000 worth of Speedo accessories, equipment or junior/kids products comes with a free learn-to-swim certificate that can be used in any Bert Lozada Swim School Camp Aqua venue. Speedo Concept Shops are in Glorietta 4, SM Megamall, Robinsons Place Ermita, Alabang Town Center, Podium, Eastwood City and Paseo de Sta. Rosa.

Mouthwash also keeps pearly whites gleaming

PFIZER Consumer Healthcare has introduced the new Tartar Control Listerine to provide consumers a product that has both cosmetic and therapeutic oral care benefits.

The product is the latest innovation in oral care in the 120-year history of Listerine.

Tartar is the yellow, crusty buildup on the gum line that causes unsightly teeth discoloration. It forms when plaque, caused by bacteria from food and fluids, is not removed and hardens on the teeth and gum line.

Tartar not only makes teeth look unattractive, but also threatens the health of the teeth and gums. Good oral care makes it important to prevent tartar buildup. If not removed quickly and efficiently, tartar can cause more serious problems like gingivitis.

While dentists can remove tartar, a daily control routine can significantly reduce buildup and prevent serious mouth and gum diseases.

Tartar Control
LISTERINE

New Tartar Control Listerine has unique features to help consumers keep their teeth clean and white to help boost their self-confidence.

Just as powerful and effective as the regular Listerine in killing 99.9 percent of germs that cause bad breath, plaque and gingivitis, the new product contains a unique zinc chloride ingredient which is clinically proven to prevent plaque from turning into tartar.

Breastfeeding moms may be charting babies’. . .

From page D1

ailments, diabetes and high blood pressure.

Most popular veggie

Ziegler said in the United States, Fits found that fried potatoes or French fries were the most commonly consumed vegetables by kids aged 15-24 months. Babies as young as seven months were already given softdrinks. She said problematic eating habits in older children were beginning to be seen in babies as young as two years old.

Ziegler underscored the need for the Philippines to take careful note of these findings as the country seemed to be developing the eating habits of Americans, especially the preference for fast-food meals and soda.

Gerber has launched the Start Healthy, Stay Healthy campaign and is working to educate both health professionals and parents on the need to set young children on the healthy nutritional path as soon as possible. Among other things, the campaign stresses that children should get at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day.

Ziegler said if parents were unsure just how much or how many pieces five servings involved, they could use Gerber products, which were made from pure fresh fruits and vegetables with nothing added and nothing taken away. Five services would be equivalent to two and a half Gerber jars (or one and one-fourth cups).

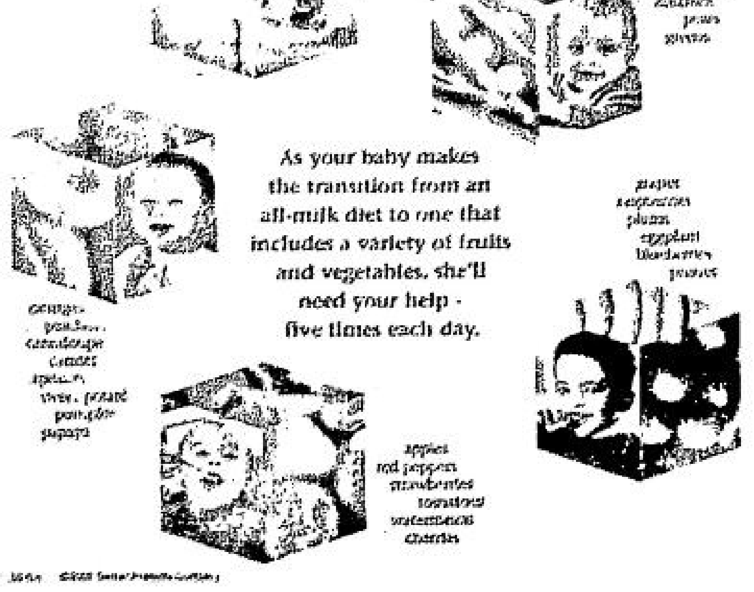
The Gerber Start Healthy, Stay Healthy campaign also advises parents to try, try again to get their children to develop a taste for a variety of food.

Ziegler said research showed it took a minimum of 10 exposures for a child to decide if he/she liked the food being offered. She advised parents not to be discouraged if a child made faces when fed something unfamiliar. Such a reaction, she said, was a child's way of exploring the taste and texture of the food and the sensation it created.

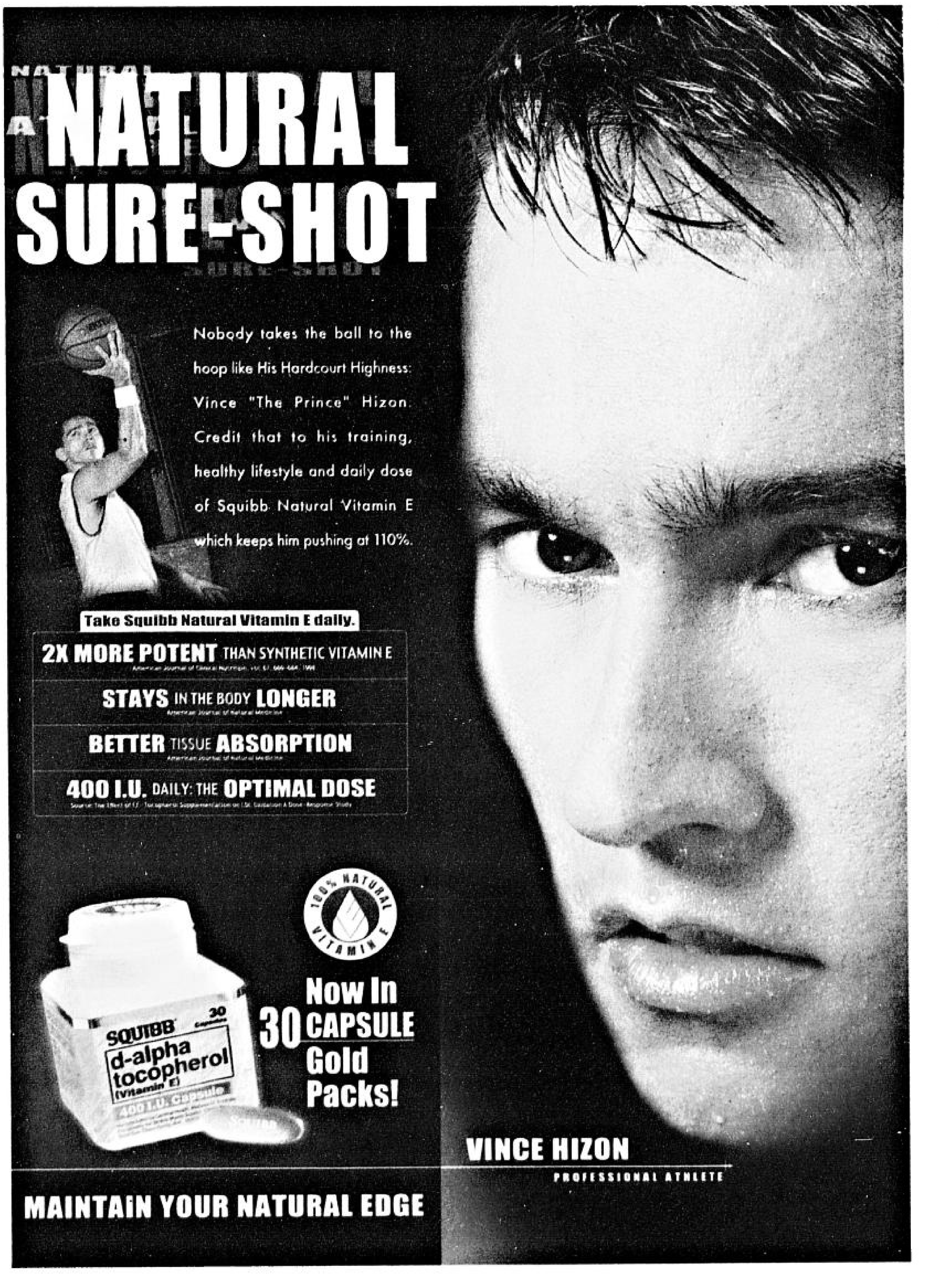
The Gerber campaign stresses that parents and caregivers have to set a good example. How they react to a certain food will likely be copied by their children. At the same time, it reminds parents not to apply any pressure on the child. "Eating should be a positive experience, so don't bribe," it says and adds that any pressure can slow the acceptance process.

For more information on baby care, visit www.gerber.com.

CHILDREN UNDER TWO NEED
Five A Day



As your baby makes the transition from an all-milk diet to one that includes a variety of fruits and vegetables, she'll need your help - five times each day.


NATURAL SURE-SHOT

Nobody takes the ball to the hoop like His Hardcourt Highness: Vince "The Prince" Hizon. Credit that to his training, healthy lifestyle and daily dose of Squibb Natural Vitamin E which keeps him pushing at 110%.

Take Squibb Natural Vitamin E daily.
2X MORE POTENT THAN SYNTHETIC VITAMIN E
STAYS IN THE BODY LONGER
BETTER TISSUE ABSORPTION
400 I.U. DAILY: THE OPTIMAL DOSE

Now In 30 CAPSULE Gold Packs!

VINCE HIZON
PROFESSIONAL ATHLETE

MAINTAIN YOUR NATURAL EDGE

Being a woman and loving it

HERE is a tribute to being female—and loving it.

"Females," says Dr. Buchard Bestak, author of "The Brain," "generally speak earlier, learn foreign languages more easily and outperform males in tests of verbal fluency."

Girls have better "rapid sequential movements" at an early age and exhibit better penmanship. Studies have also shown that more males than females suffer from speech problems.

Women are able to balance left and right hemispheres of the brain with greater ease than men. This means women are more adept than men at doing two different things at the same time (writing and doing math).

Research indicates that while men have greater muscular strength, women have a higher threshold for physical pain (men are often more scared than women to go to a doctor for diagnosis/treatment). As for stress, women tend to have a higher tolerance for emotional/mental pressure.

But does it really matter who is more superior? A new attitude toward the sexes is emerging. The difference doesn't matter. More and more women are now in jobs that 10 years ago were dominated by men—aviation, military service, politics, engineering, etc.

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

Free to be who you are

As late as a generation ago, mothers taught their daughters they were destined to be wives. This reminds me of my favorite anecdote: "Master," said a young woman to her teacher, "I am sad because it is my destiny to be a woman." "My child," the master replied, "it is not your destiny to be a woman—that is your fate. Your destiny is what you make of your womanhood."

With eyes wide open, today's women are no longer limited by their mothers' definition of their roles. They have the freedom to be who they are without guilt and coercion.

Today's woman is able to balance two careers fairly well—motherhood and a corporate job or business.

Solid self-image

There is a direct connection between how you feel about yourself and your body image. You don't develop self-esteem if you do not have a secure sense of self. But even with a high self-esteem, the battle against crow's feet, big hips, graying hair and sagging skin can easily demoralize a person.

Most psychologists believe that in order for body image to change, one's attitude must also change. While most women would like to solve their weight problems first, wanting is different from doing. Some women get stuck on the wanting and never cross over to the doing so depression sets in.

Some tips to make you feel good about yourself:

1. Find a reason. Look for the most alluring side of you. What is your greatest asset?

2. Look for a heroine. There must be someone you admire. Find her picture and keep it for inspiration.

3. Affirm love. Believe in loving words that can uplift you like "You are a special woman."

4. Write to yourself. Talk to yourself through a letter. Imagine that your higher self is teaching you all you need to do to improve yourself.

5. Believe. Faith in yourself is of paramount importance. If you don't believe in yourself, who will?

6. Find your purpose. If you are dissatisfied with your situation, do something about it. You will find your value in what best fulfills you.

Load up on immune system supplements and antioxidants:

Take Vitamin A/betacarotene that boosts the white blood cell count. The best source is natural (i.e., one sweet potato has more than double the daily requirement). Sources include broccoli, watermelon, carrots, liver. Recommended: Vitamin A—4,000 IUs; betacarotene—6 mg daily;

Vitamin B6—1.6 mg daily or two large bananas. Other sources: chicken, fish, liver, rice, avocado, walnuts, sunflower seeds;

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Vitamin C, the virus-fighting vitamin—1,000 mg daily. Most fruits especially kiwi, guava and strawberries and vegetables like broccoli and red bell peppers;

Vitamin D—let the sun shine on you (before 8 a.m.) for 10-15 minutes daily or take a glass of nonfat fortified milk. Eat fish like tuna and salmon;

Vitamin E—promotes T-cell growth (T-cells activate the immune system when foreign bodies are present); take 400 IUs daily;

Iron—eat a low-fat diet rich in iron (15 mg daily); sources: lean steak, clams/oysters, dark chicken meat, green leafy vegetables;

Increase magnesium intake to 280 mg; zinc, 12 mg; and selenium, 55 micrograms; sources: milk, oysters, oats, whole grains, tuna.

(From the "Vitamin Bible" by Earl Mindell. But remember to always consult your physician, before taking any supplements or medications.)

Love-yourself scrub:

2 c rock salt or uncooked pound rice
½ c virgin coco oil/olive oil
3 drops rose or lavender essential aromatherapy oil

Mix ingredients. Gently rub the body from feet to neck. For a facial scrub, use ½ c sugar instead of salt. Rinse with cool water.

Open letter

Woman, you are not alone. We are all sisters; your breath is one with mine. Your heart beats in rhythm with my own, connected by an unseen cord that runs through every female heart. We are together in joy and pain, dreams and triumphs.

Allow yourself to flow with the cadence of life song and, in so doing, pursue your separate melody. Bound by an inexplicable knowledge that our life is meant to be lived with, for and by love, we take our place among the selfless—to heal and to serve, ultimately mastering through leadership. For this is the core of our being and the seat of our soul... Embracing our destiny with confidence, we declare, "I am woman, I am one."

Love and light!

Book celebrates beautiful Filipina

NICOLETTE Bell

NIVEA sponsored the launching recently of the coffee-table book "Muse," a celebration of the beauty of Filipino women.

"Muse" is a brainchild of makeup artist Patrick Rosas. Collaborating with photographer Raymund Isaac, Rosas shows in the book how to enhance the unique and innate loveliness of Filipinas, from youthful ladies to women in their prime.

"Muse" is divided into four sections to address the typical Filipina skin colors—dusky (beige), Oriental (yellow), mestiza (pink) and Eurasian (blue). Models are well-known beauties and celebrities from various fields.

During the launch, Nivea marketing director Rica King presented Rosas and Isaac with tokens of appreciation for their work in promoting the Filipina beauty. She said Nivea was proud of Rosas and Isaac for coming up with a book celebrating the beauty of the Filipina and her alluring skin.

Guests were presented the complete Nivea Visage Anti-Wrinkle Q10 Plus skin care line—day lotion, night cream and eye zone cream. The Nivea Visage Anti-Wrinkle Q10 Plus regimen reactivates skin's natural wrinkle repair tools with the combined power of the skin's own CoEnzymes, Q10 plus R.

CoEnzyme Q10 is naturally present in skin. It allows skin cells to renew themselves and make repairs. CoEnzyme R works on the outside by restructuring and strengthening the top skin layers to be able to store moisture and lipids. This reduces the formation of flakes while making the skin smoother, more even and refined, and firmer.

With both CoEnzymes, Nivea Visage smoothens the skin to diminish the appearance of fine lines and the depth of wrinkles.

RAYA Mananquil

ORANGE Aberin

SANDRA Fabie-Gfelier

CINDY Kurleto

ASYMMETRIC fringe frames the face, highlighting its structure.

New hairstyles and colors

PIANDRÉ Salon offers Politix, a collection of new hairstyles and colors.

The styles in the Politix collection are different and daring. The cuts have edgier styles with asymmetric fringes. They combine soft looks with hard lines. Old-style fringes or bangs are a thing of the past. The outlines are more defined, more deliberate—not too busy, messy or complicated.

The colors by L'Oreal are more vibrant and come in solid pieces to give depth and dimension. For men, a stylized mohawk makes a comeback with multi-length edges and colors in thick panels.

Until May 30, get 15-percent off on color services. On June 1-20, clients get 15-percent off on color plus a free Powerdose treatment after the service.

THE GO-GO look from the movie "Kill Bill"—undercut fringe in front with an overlapping layer to soften the lines

Bikini Summit participants get ample protection

HAWAIIAN Tropic "protected" participants in the recent Mossimo Bikini Summit 2004 in Boracay.

Contestants made sure they were amply "covered," particularly by Ozone Sunblock SPF70, which provides a 360-degree protection, before participating in Summit activities.

Miss Hawaiian Tropic and champion in the female division Dorothea Kriegl, used the tanners, protectants and after-sun relief. The half-German beauty said Hawaiian Tropic provided a good, even tan. Kriegl also used Cool Aloe Gel after prolonged sun exposure.

Second runner-up Asia Laurel used Hawaiian Tropic's Tan Amplifier Oil for a pictorial to heighten her natural skin color.

Ozone 70 SPF was one of her favorites during the Mossimo competition.

Australian male finalist Dane Hutchinson said the Dark Tanning Lotion gave him a deep, natural-looking tan without damaging his sensitive skin. He recommended Royal Tanning Blend for morning and late-afternoon use. He used also Forever Tan, an aloe-filled after-sun moisturizer.

Hawaiian Tropic, which offers a complete range of sun care products, is exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corp. and available in leading department stores, drugstores and supermarkets nationwide.

MISS Hawaiian Tropic Dorothea Kriegl shows off her winning form.

Badminton elimination round on May 15

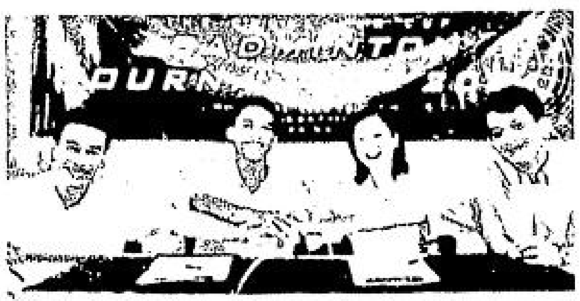
THE FIRST Crossover Cup Badminton Tournament will be held at Club 650, E. Rodriguez Ave., Libis, Quezon City.

Elimination round will be on May 15 and the finals will be on May 22. A special awards party will be held at the Chef and Brewer Bar in Ortigas that will feature the Time and a Half band.

Participants will compete in the mixed doubles open class and mixed doubles combined age categories for 70, 80, 90 and 105 years old.

Over P50,000 in cash and other valuable prizes will be given away.

For details and registration, call 8120887 and 0917-3324533 or e-mail teampowerplay@yahoo.com. Registration forms are available at Club 650 or online at www.pbnet.net.



AT the contract signing: Robert Crespo, Crossover AVP for corporate communications; JR Banson, Club 650 managing director; Weena Lim, Team Power Play managing director; and Sandy Ocampo, Crossover AVP for marketing

■ **Business / B1**

Peso slides past 56:$1; stocks slump

■ **World / A12**

Red Cross told prisoner abuse in Iraq 'part of process'

■ **News/ A8**

5 suspects in Boracay murders released for lack of evidence

■ **Across / A17**

Pacificador takes lead over Antique rivals

Tanong ng Bayan / A13

Exit poll, exit poll, paano ka ginawa?

ANG PAHAYAG NI MERCY ABAD, SA ABC

Stars bright, stars dim in electoral show

By Marinel R. Cruz and Jocelyn Valle, *Contributor*

STAR FOR All Seasons Vilma Santos seemed sure of a second term as mayor of Lipa City in Batangas province.

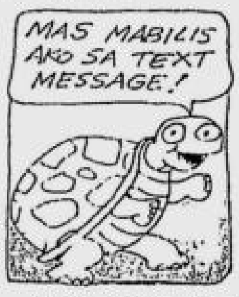
"We'll know the exact figures by tonight," Santos yesterday told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview. "We're happy that the election

STARS/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Namfrel 'quick count' moving at snail's pace

By C. D. Balana and Philip C. Tubeza


MAS MABILIS AKO SA TEXT MESSAGE!

OPERATION Quick Count of the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) may not be quick after all.

NAMFREL/ A4

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Wednesday, May 12, 2004 ★★ 58 pages / 5 sections / vol. 19 / no. 154 P18
website: www.inq7.net

FPJ angry; GMA glows

BULLIT MARQUEZ, AP

A DOWNCAST Fernando Poe Jr. accuses the administration of widespread cheating and appeals to the media to tell the truth.

Actor cries fraud, hits media for 'trending'

By Carlito Pablo, Jerome Aning and Christine O. Avendaño

FERNANDO Poe Jr. and his camp are crying election fraud.

At a press conference yesterday in Greenhills, San Juan, the standard-bearer of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino said he was winning in the counting of the votes but media reports of ongoing quick counts were saying otherwise.

"I would like to [tell] my supporters, volunteers and the Filipino people that in this fight I am with you all the way. *Kaya lang ho, gusto ko lang ipaalam, sa bilangan nanguguna kami kaya lang [ang] lumalabas sa media kabaligtaran,*" the 64-year-old movie idol said.

The press conference, held in a building on Wilson Street, was over in two minutes. Poe took no questions.

A KNP "victory march" assembled at 7:30 last night on a stretch of Ayala Avenue in Makati City, near the site where Poe held his *miting de avance* just four days ago.

Tension swept the Makati business district as about 1,000 anti-riot personnel from the military and police arrived to contain FPJ protesters gathering at the corner of Ayala avenue and Paseo de

FPJ/ A10

VICTORY hangs heavy through the Palace corridors as a delighted President Macapagal calls a press conference and hosts lunch for the Malacañang press corps.

Macapagal basks in 'moment of glory,' talks of convening Con-Con

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Gil Cabacungan Jr.

THE AIR of victory hung in the air, but she was careful to keep her emotions in check.

In her first public appearance a day after the elections, and with unofficial results and exit polls showing she was leading over actor Fernando Poe Jr., President Macapagal-Arroyo basked in what she described as a "moment of national glory" for the Philippines, and stressed the need for unity and peace

"The feelings of one person, least of all me, are not important," she said. "Peace and unity—that's the most important."

At a thanksgiving lunch she hosted for Palace reporters, Ms Macapagal talked about uniting the country, and submitting to the next Congress an administration measure convening a constitutional convention. "I also praise the Lord that the No-el (no election) scenario did not happen," she said.

Ms Macapagal was confirming a statement by the Catholic

MACAPAGAL/ A10

ELEKSYON 2004

As of 5:53 p.m., May 11, 2004

AMA 13,698 precincts

	PRESIDENT	VOTES
1	Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria	553,388
2	Poe, Fernando Jr. K.	540,118
3	Lacson, Panfilo M.	248,425
4	Roco, Raul S.	145,829
5	Villanueva, Eduardo C.	129,091
	VICE PRESIDENT	
1	Legarda, Loren B.	718,353
2	De Castro, Noli L.	692,166
3	Aquino, Herminio S.	102,998
4	Pajo, Rodolfo T.	7,828
	SENATORS	
1	Roxas, Mar Manuel II A.	1,014,621
2	Gordon, Richard J.	831,599
3	Cayetano, Pia Juliana S.	764,203
4	Pimentel, Aquilino, Jr. Q.	758,959
5	Enrile, Juan P.	755,144
6	Lim, Alfredo S.	739,656
7	Madrigal, Jamby A.S.	728,837
8	Revilla, Bong Ramon Jr. B.	715,333
9	Biazon, Rodolfo G.	705,597
10	Santiago, Miriam D.	688,281
11	Maceda, Ernesto M.	575,434
12	Lapid, Manuel M.	568,546
13	Estrada, Jinggoy E.	568,150
14	Barbers, Robert Z.	558,754
15	Osmeña, John Henry R.	493,762
16	Jaworski, Robert S.	476,028
17	Mercado, Orlando S.	470,686
18	Anson-Roa, Ma.Elisa Boots C.	458,791
19	Chavez, Frank I.	375,805
20	Tatad, Francisco S.	372,271

8 K-4, 4 KNP bets lead in Senate race

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE ADMINISTRATION appeared to have scored big in the senatorial race with eight candidates of President Macapagal-Arroyo's K-4 coalition looking set to clinch a majority of the top 12 positions, according to an exit poll conducted by the Social Weather Stations.

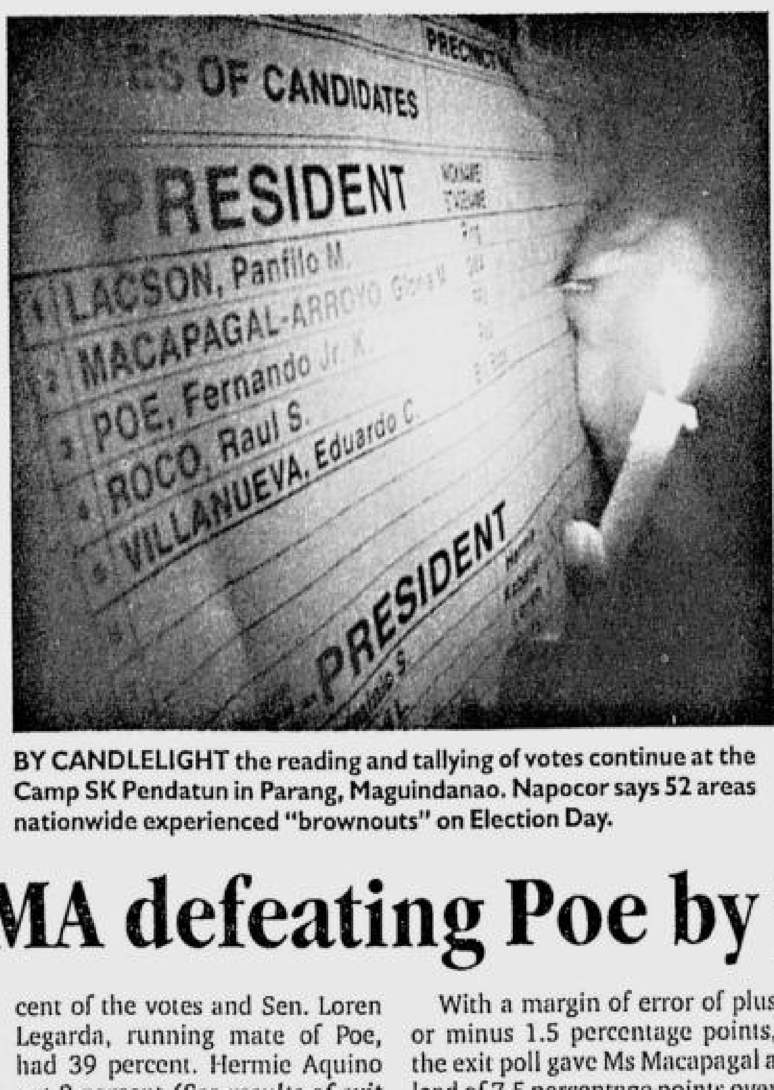
The SWS poll, conducted at the close of the voting on May 10 and released yesterday, showed former Trade Secretary Mar Roxas leading the pack, with 49 percent of the vote, followed by his fellow K-4 candidates Ramon "Bong" Revilla and Pia Cayetano.

The other administration candidates who made it to the "magic 12" were Miriam Defensor-Santiago, former tourism secretary Richard Gordon, former Pampanga governor Lito Lapid and reelectionist senators Robert Barbers and Rodolfo Biazon.

The three from the opposition Koalisyon ng

8 K-4/ A20

Bloodiest elections in 2 decades



BY CANDLELIGHT the reading and tallying of votes continue at the Camp SK Pendatun in Parang, Maguindanao. Napocor says 52 areas nationwide experienced "brownouts" on Election Day.

By Alcuin Papa and Christian V. Esguerra

IT WAS the country's bloodiest election campaign in over two decades and there was no sign of a let-up in the bloodletting.

The Armed Forces and the national police remained on high alert yesterday, saying the critical phase of Monday's polls was just beginning with the start of the canvass of votes around the country.

"The counting and the canvassing are critical," Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, spokesperson for the Philippine National Police, told reporters. "We're not saying that there will be violence, but tension can develop anytime."

The latest figures from the Armed Forces showed a total of 117 people had died in election-related incidents all over the country since the campaign season started last Dec. 15.

BLOODIEST / A5

Noli, Loren both claim poll victory

By Carlito Pablo, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Jo Clemente
PDI Central Luzon Desk

"THE PEOPLE have spoken," the top three vice presidential contenders agreed. But what the people said, they heard three different ways.

"They want me to serve them as vice president of the Philippines," Sen. Loren Legarda of Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino said in a statement issued yesterday, just a day after the national elections.

In his own statement, administration candidate Sen. Noli de Castro said: "I believe I will get a clear and convincing big margin against my opponents."

Seeing the coveted position as a toss-up between Legarda and De Castro in his hometown in Tarlac, Alyansa ng Pag-Asa's Hermie Aquino's attitude was: "We have accomplished what we set out to do. We must respect (the people's decision)."

The counting is far from over, of course. Even so, Legarda's statement referred to "victory in the horizon."

She noted that initial tallies and exit polls indicated that she was bound for a "very wide lead"

NOLI/ A11

SWS exit poll says GMA defeating Poe by 9 points

IT'S ALL over save for the counting of votes if results of the exit poll conducted by a private polling group are to be believed.

President Macapagal-Arroyo got 41 percent of the votes cast on May 10, while actor Fernando Poe Jr. received 32 percent of the votes, the Social Weather Stations reported yesterday evening on ABS-CBN's "TV Patrol."

It was ABS-CBN that sponsored the poll in which SWS interviewed 4,627 respondents nationwide at their residences a day after they cast their votes.

Ms Macapagal's running mate was also ahead in the vice presidential race, said SWS president Mahar Mangahas, Poe's first cousin.

Sen. Noli de Castro had 47 percent of the votes and Sen. Loren Legarda, running mate of Poe, had 39 percent. Hermie Aquino got 3 percent. *(See results of exit poll for senators on Page 3)*

In the presidential race, Sen. Panfilo Lacson came in third with 9 percent. Former Sen. Raul Roco and Bro. Eddie Villanueva both had 5 percent. Eight percent of the respondents gave no answer.

With a margin of error of plus or minus 1.5 percentage points, the exit poll gave Ms Macapagal a lead of 7.5 percentage points over Poe.

Ms Macapagal's lead is equivalent to 2.66 million votes as SWS placed the voters' turnout at 81.5 percent, or 35.48 million. The Commission on Elections earlier said that 43.54 million registered voters were eligible to vote on May 10.

The President was also leading in the quick count being conducted by the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel).

As of 4 p.m. yesterday, Ms Macapagal had 22,304 votes, followed by Poe with 14,886; Lacson 4,619; Villanueva 3,739, and Roco 3,347.

SWS EXIT/ A20

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■ [illegible] usine[illegible] /B1

Peso slides past 56:$1; stocks slump

■ World / A12

Red Cross told prisoner abuse in Iraq 'part of process'

■ News/ A8

5 suspects in Boracay murders released for lack of evidence

■ [illegible]s / A17

Pacificador takes lead over Antique rivals

anong [illegible] ayan / A13

Exit poll, exit poll, paano ka ginawa?

ANG PAHAYAG NI MERCY ABAD, SA ABC

Stars bright, stars dim in electoral show

By Marinel R. Cruz
and Jocelyn Valle, *Contributor*

STAR FOR All Seasons Vilma Santos seemed sure of a second term as mayor of Lipa City in Batangas province.

"We'll know the exact figures by tonight," Santos yesterday told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview. "We're happy that the election

STARS A4

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Wednesday, May 12, 2004 ★★ 58 pages / 5 sections / vol. 19 / no. 154 P18

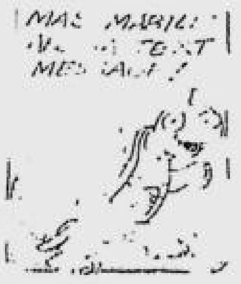
website www.inq7.net

Namfrel 'quick count' moving at snail's pace

By C. D. Balana
and Philip C. Tubeza

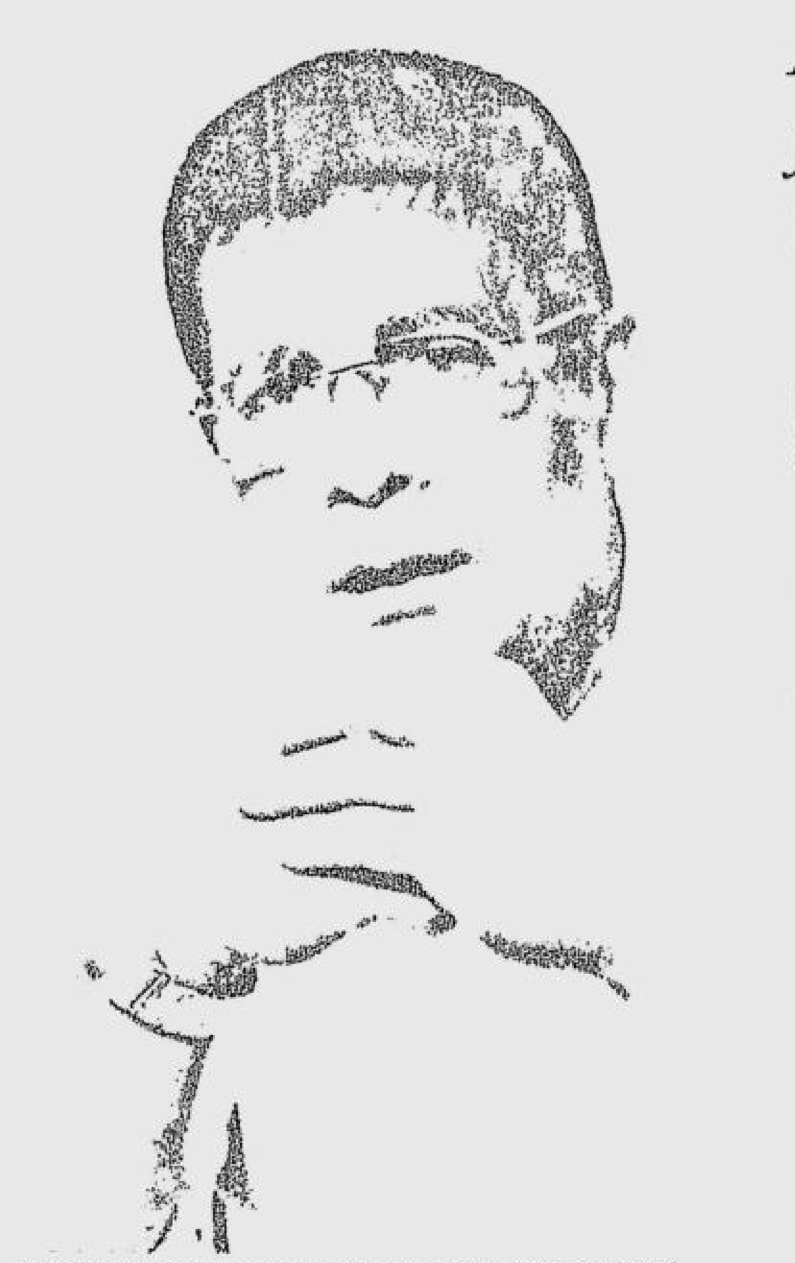
OPERATION Quick Count of the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) may not be quick after all.

NAMFREL A4



MAS MABILIS [illegible] TEXT MESSAGE!

FPJ angry; GMA glows



A DOWNCAST Fernando Poe Jr. accuses the administration of widespread cheating and appeals to the media to tell the truth.

Actor cries fraud, hits media for 'trending'

By Carlito Pablo,
Jerome Aning
and Christine O. Avendaño

FERNANDO Poe Jr. and his camp are crying election fraud.

At a press conference yesterday in Greenhills, San Juan, the standard-bearer of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino said he was winning in the counting of the votes but media reports of ongoing quick counts were saying otherwise.

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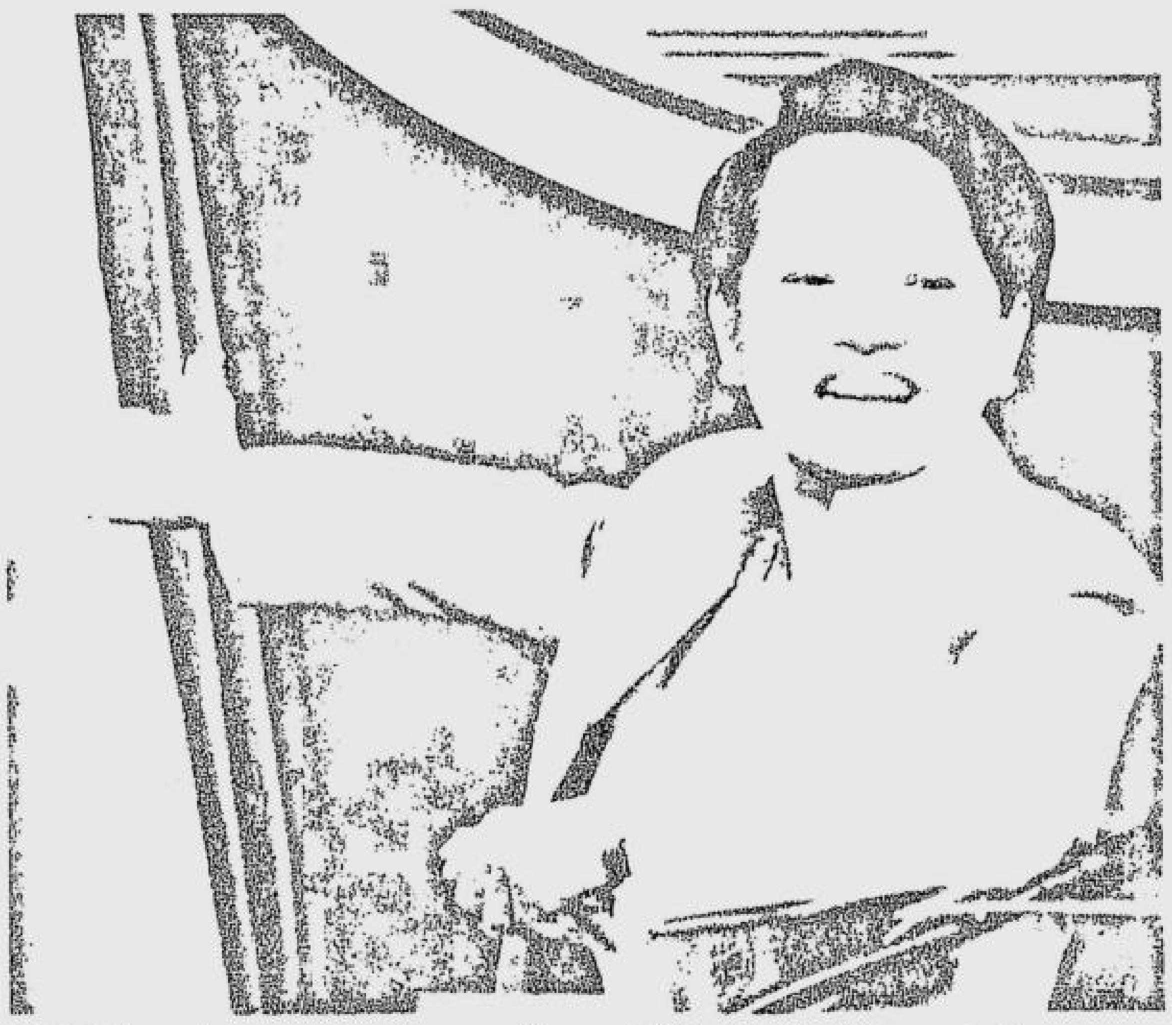


VICTORY hangs heavy through the Palace corridors as a delighted President Macapagal calls a press conference and hosts lunch for the Malacañang press corps.

Macapagal basks in 'moment of glory,' talks of convening Con-Con

By Juliet Labog-Javellana
and Gil Cabacungan Jr.

THE AIR [illegible] her emotion [illegible] In her fi[illegible] publi[illegible] day after the ele[illegible] inoffic[illegible] Fern[illegible] Po[illegible] 'moment [illegible] the Philip[illegible] for [illegible] person[illegible] impo[illegible] important [illegible] port[illegible] Ms Macapaga[illegible] the country. next Con[illegible] the Lord [illegible] Ms Macap[illegible] statement

8 K-4, 4 KNP bets lead in Senate race

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE ADMINISTRATION appeared [illegible] big [illegible] senatorial [illegible] with [illegible] candidat[illegible] President Macapagal-Arroyo's K-4 coalition [illegible] set to [illegible] majority of the top [illegible] according to [illegible] poll conducted [illegible] Weather Stat[illegible]

The SWS [illegible] released [illegible] showed former Trade Secretary Mar Ro[illegible] leading the pack [illegible] 49 percent [illegible] followed by [illegible] K-4 candidate Ra[illegible] "Bong" Revilla and Pia Ca[illegible]

The [illegible] administration candidates who made it to the "magic 12" were Miriam Defensor-Santiago, former tourism secretary Richard Gordon, former Pampanga governor Lito Lapid and reelectionist senators Robert Barbers and Rodolfo Biazor.

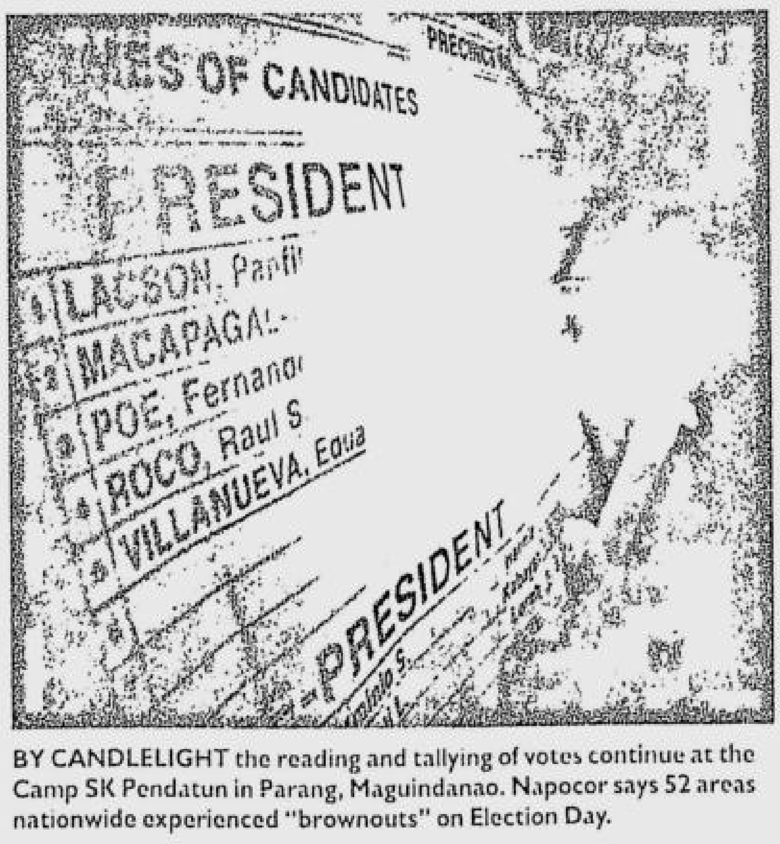
The three from the opposition Koalisyon ng [illegible]

20

[illegible] 5 53[illegible]
May 11, 2004 — 13,698 precincts

	PRESIDENT	VOTES
	Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria	55[illegible] 88
	Poe, Fernando Jr K.	540 18
	Lacson, Panfilo M.	248 42[illegible]
	Roco, Raul S.	145 [illegible]25
	Villanueva, Eduardo C.	129 091
	VICE PRESIDENT	
	Legarda, Loren B.	718 3
	De Castro, No[illegible]	[illegible]92 [illegible]
	Aquino, Herminio	[illegible]2 998
	Pajo, Ro[illegible] T.	7 828
	SENATORS	
	Roxas, Mar Manuel II A.	014 621
	Gordon, Richard J.	[illegible] 599
	Cayetano, Pia Juliana S.	764 203
	Pimentel, Aquilino, Jr. Q.	[illegible] 959
	Enrile, Juan P.	5 144
	Lim, Alfredo S.	[illegible]056
	Madrigal, Jamby A.S.	
	Revilla, Bong Ramon Jr. B.	
	Biazon, Rodolfo G.	[illegible]
10	Santiago, Miriam D.	[illegible]81
1[illegible]	Maceda, Ernesto M.	[illegible]434
12	Lapid, Manuel M.	8 546
1[illegible]	Estrada, [illegible]	56[illegible]
14	Barbers, Robert [illegible]	55[illegible] 754
[illegible]	Osmeña, [illegible] Henry	49[illegible]
[illegible]6	Jaworski, Ro[illegible]	470
	Mercado, Orlando	470 [illegible]
18	Anson-Roa, Ma E.	456
19	Chavez, Frank I.	
20	Tatad, Fra[illegible]	

Bloodiest elections in 2 decades



BY CANDLELIGHT the reading and tallying of votes continue at the Camp SK Pendatun in Parang, Maguindanao. Napocor says 52 areas nationwide experienced "brownouts" on Election Day.

By Alcuin Papa
and Christian V. Esguerra

[illegible] country [illegible] bloodie[illegible] [illegible] in over two [illegible] was no sign of [illegible] bloodletting [illegible] and the na[illegible] [illegible] on high [illegible] ving the criti[illegible] Monday polls was [illegible] with the start of [illegible] around the [illegible] and the canvass[illegible] Chief Supt. Joe[illegible] spokesperson [illegible] the [illegible] National Police told [illegible] "We [illegible] not saying tha[illegible] [illegible] nce but ter[illegible] anytime [illegible] campaign [illegible] last Dec. 15

BLOODIEST A[illegible]

Noli, Loren both claim poll victory

By Carlito Pablo,
Juliet Labog-Javellana
and Jo Clemente
PDI Central [illegible]

"THE PEOPL[illegible] top three [illegible] tenders ag[illegible] ple said, [illegible] ent ways [illegible] "They [illegible] Sen[illegible] Koal[illegible] Pilip[illegible] In [illegible] ation [illegible] De Castro [illegible] Aqu[illegible] accompl[illegible] Jo We[illegible] state

SWS exit poll says GMA defeating Poe by 9 points

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It was ABS-CBN that [illegible] sponsored the poll which SWS interviewed 4,62[illegible] respondents nationwide at the [illegible] residence [illegible] day after they cast t[illegible] vote [illegible] Ms Macapagal [illegible] also ahead [illegible] SWS pr[illegible] Ma[illegible] Man[illegible]

[illegible] nate of Poe [illegible] Herminio Aquino got [illegible] percent (*See results of exit poll for senators on Page 3*) [illegible] Raul Ro[illegible]

With a margin [illegible] or minus 1.5 percentage [illegible] the exit poll gave Ms Macapagal lead of [illegible] percent [illegible] Poe.

Ms Macapa[illegible] lent to 2.66 m[illegible] placed the [illegible] percent [illegible] Comm[illegible] [illegible] the [illegible]

SWS EXI[illegible]

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Second FRONT PAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread over Visayas and Mindanao.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/05/12/04

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Polls acceptable, traders say

Comelec calls for vigilance as canvassing starts finally

By Martin P. Marfil

THE CANVASSING of votes started yesterday with an election official reminding the people to be extra vigilant as this was the part of the election process where *dagdag-bawas* (vote padding and shaving) was likely to occur.

Election Commissioner Resurreccion Borra said: "We expect the observance of the rules [but] the citizens [have] to be vigilant in watching the proceedings [to] immediately expose any irregularities.

"As long as there are written reports, we will take the proper steps [to investigate], but if these are merely verbal, we will respond prudently," Borra said.

Following the election process, the ballot boxes and election returns were transported from the polling precincts to the centers where the canvassing are to be held.

From there, the certificates of canvass (CoC) will be brought to the city and provincial boards of canvassers for transmission to the National Board of Canvassers at the Philippine International Convention Center in Manila.

The Commission on Elections expects to receive 115 CoCs from the cities, 73 from the provinces and five from various districts.

Incompetence

Under the law, the canvass at the municipal level should end 36 hours after the close of the polls, while those for the cities and provinces should be completed in 48 hours and 72 hours, respectively.

The National Board of Canvassers will convene on May 15 at the PICC to canvass all the CoCs coming from all the provincial, city and district boards of canvassers," Borra said.

The canvass is expected to end 15 days after convening.

Yesterday, a group of protesters—including foreigners from a church-based group—demonstrated in front of the Comelec, decrying the incompetence of the electoral body.

Fr. Joe Dizon of Patriots, a fraud-monitoring group, said their members were able to collect data on the massive disenfranchisement of voters throughout the country.

"There was massive confusion nationwide and because of this, many were disenfranchised. If this was a design, it was an evil design," Dizon said, adding that most of those unable to vote were in "opposition bailiwicks" like Bicol, Central Luzon and Mindanao.

Asked for proof, Dizon said Patriots would hold a press conference today where they would reveal what they had culled in their fact-finding sorties.

Asked to comment, Borra challenged the group to reveal their figures.

Back to Mindanao

"Let's not make wild accusations. That's not fair. We have reports from the field and the turnout was comparatively high. We will be getting the statistical data in due time but right now, we cannot say that 50 percent were disenfranchised," he said.

Also yesterday, Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano was reassigned to Regions XI and XII to take over the areas assigned to Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, who has been taken ill.

Garcillano had been removed from the same post after allegations surfaced that he had participated in previous cases of *dagdag-bawas*.

Don't spook the market, stockbrokers urge pols

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

BUSINESSMEN yesterday found Monday's elections satisfactory, albeit less than perfect, as stockbrokers and dealers urged politicians to refrain from doing anything to spook the stock market.

"The elections were not perfect but acceptable," said Francis Chua, executive vice president of the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce Inc.

The businessmen said the on-going canvassing process was more critical in view of the emerging tight race between President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Fernando Poe Jr. They are depending on the independent poll watchdogs and media's parallel counts as plausible barometers in assessing the credibility of the results that they claimed were more important than the winner in maintaining confidence in the country.

On the other hand, the heads of the country's association of stockbrokers and dealers called on all political parties to nurture an expected upswing in business confidence by refraining from partisan politics and destabilization measures that would lower business and investor confidence and cause uncertainty, anxiety and divisiveness among Filipinos.

The call was made in a press statement issued by Vivian Yuchengco and Nestor Aguila, chair and president, respectively, of the Philippine Association of Securities Brokers and Dealers Inc. (PASBO).

They said the business community would be gratified to see the major political parties and leaders respecting the country's democratic processes and institutions by awaiting the results of the elections.

"We must put an end to partisan politics and strident and divisive rhetoric that had marked some sectors of the political campaign just ended," they said. "Let us respect the democratic processes."

'Less turbulent'

Businessman Raul T. Concepcion said that despite reports of sporadic cheating, violence, and disenfranchisement of a number of voters, he found the elections to be "orderly and peaceful on the whole" and "less turbulent" than previous political exercises.

But Concepcion warned that the political exercise has now moved into its more critical phase with the counting of the ballots.

He said businessmen were keenly watching the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) quick count and media reports on the canvassing to assess the credibility of the results. Concepcion said that as long as the official tally of the Commission on Elections do not stray too far from the parallel count of Namfrel and media outfits like the Inquirer, then the results would be upheld and respected by the people no matter who wins.

Concepcion is the twin brother of Namfrel chairman Jose Concepcion.

The East West Center, an American think-tank, had warned prior to the elections that this election would be more about winning credibly than the election itself.

Credibility

In his May 7 report, East West Center senior fellow Victor Ordonez said: "As Arroyo gets more and more comfortable with her lead, there will be more an more concern about the credibility of the count. The more people that count, the better."

Concepcion said that the peso's weakness and the stock market's slide yesterday were largely due to movements in the international markets rather than a reaction to the initial results of the elections.*(Related story on Page B1)*

Some pundits have traced the markets' weakness yesterday over the close race between the President and opposition bet Fernando Poe Jr. based on early returns when the most recent surveys showed the incumbent enjoying a big edge over the movie star.

"I think businessmen are more worried on the credibility of the elections rather than who ends up with the most votes," Concepcion said.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 2004
E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph
Second FRONT PAGE

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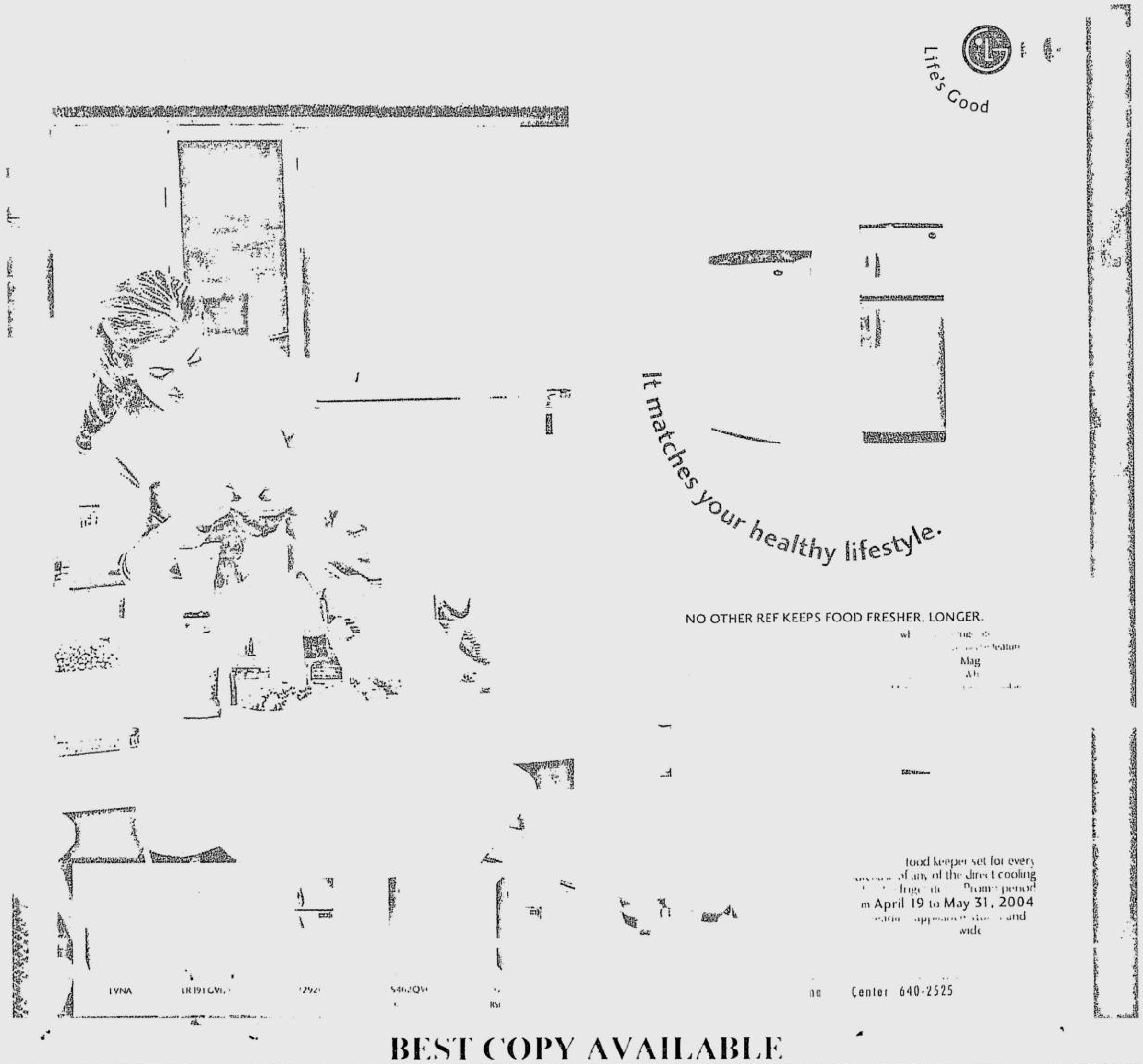
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Lacson downplays media quick count

By Norman Bordadora

THE CAMP of presidential candidate Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday downplayed the importance of the media quick count which shows him trailing President Macapagal-Arroyo and movie actor Fernando Poe Jr., saying they represent less than 2 percent of the country's total precincts.

Angelito Banayo, Lacson's spokesperson and political strategist, told the INQUIRER it would be better for the electorate to just wait for the results of the quick count being conducted by the National Movement for Free Elections.

"Sadly, (the Namfrel quick count is) also quite slow," Banayo said. "As it stands, we can't comment on results of the media quick count. It's too small a sample to judge what would be the outcome of the elections," he said in a telephone interview.

Banayo said their own quick count shows Lacson pacing Poe while Ms Macapagal is in far third.

Banayo said that Lacson remains hopeful he could pull off a surprise victory despite his dismal showing in the media quick count and in most exit polls.

"He's quite hopeful," Banayo told reporters.

Lacson showed up at his campaign headquarters in Makati City yesterday but shied away from the media.

Banayo said Lacson does not want to comment on the exit polls until he sees the partial results of Namfrel's quick count.

He said that they have mobilized some 2,000 lawyers and law students around the country to guard against cheating, which he said is likely to take place during the canvassing.

"It's at the municipal and provincial canvassing that fraud for national candidates is normally implemented. We have 2,000 lawyers watching the municipal canvassing to ensure we are not cheated," Banayo said.

US exec says polls 'orderly'

Rosa-May V. de Guzman
PDI Mindanao Bureau

PARANG, Maguindanao—Despite violent incidents and fraud that marred Monday's election in the Southern Philippines, a US official, who came to Central Mindanao to observe the conduct of the balloting, said the conduct of the polls in the region was "orderly."

Joseph Saus, assigned with the political affairs division of the United States Embassy in Manila, told the INQUIRER that from his observation, there was an "honest and free election" in the region.

Saus was one of the 100 observers the US sent to various areas of the country not only to "observe the conduct of elections but to identify best practices and provide recommendations for changes in future elections."

He visited key Maguindanao and North Cotabato areas on Monday.

"Democracy is very alive in the Philippines. It's very heartening to see people expressing their right of suffrage," he said.

Yesterday, Saus met with poll and military officials in the region and shared with them his observation.

Clarita Callar, Central Mindanao Comelec director, said Saus did not mention any problems or security concerns to her.

"He only told me when we met at the headquarters of the Army's 6th Infantry Division (in Awang, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao) that the conduct of elections in the region was orderly," Callar said in a telephone interview.

Callar hoped that Saus' observation would help build national and international confidence in the elections.

Deficit below target—GMA

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AMID charges of wanton use of government funds, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday claimed that her administration has managed to keep its spending within prudent limits in the first four months of the year.

The President told reporters she expects the budget deficit to remain below target through April this year.

The government's budget deficit in the first quarter this year was below the P58.9 billion target set for the period.

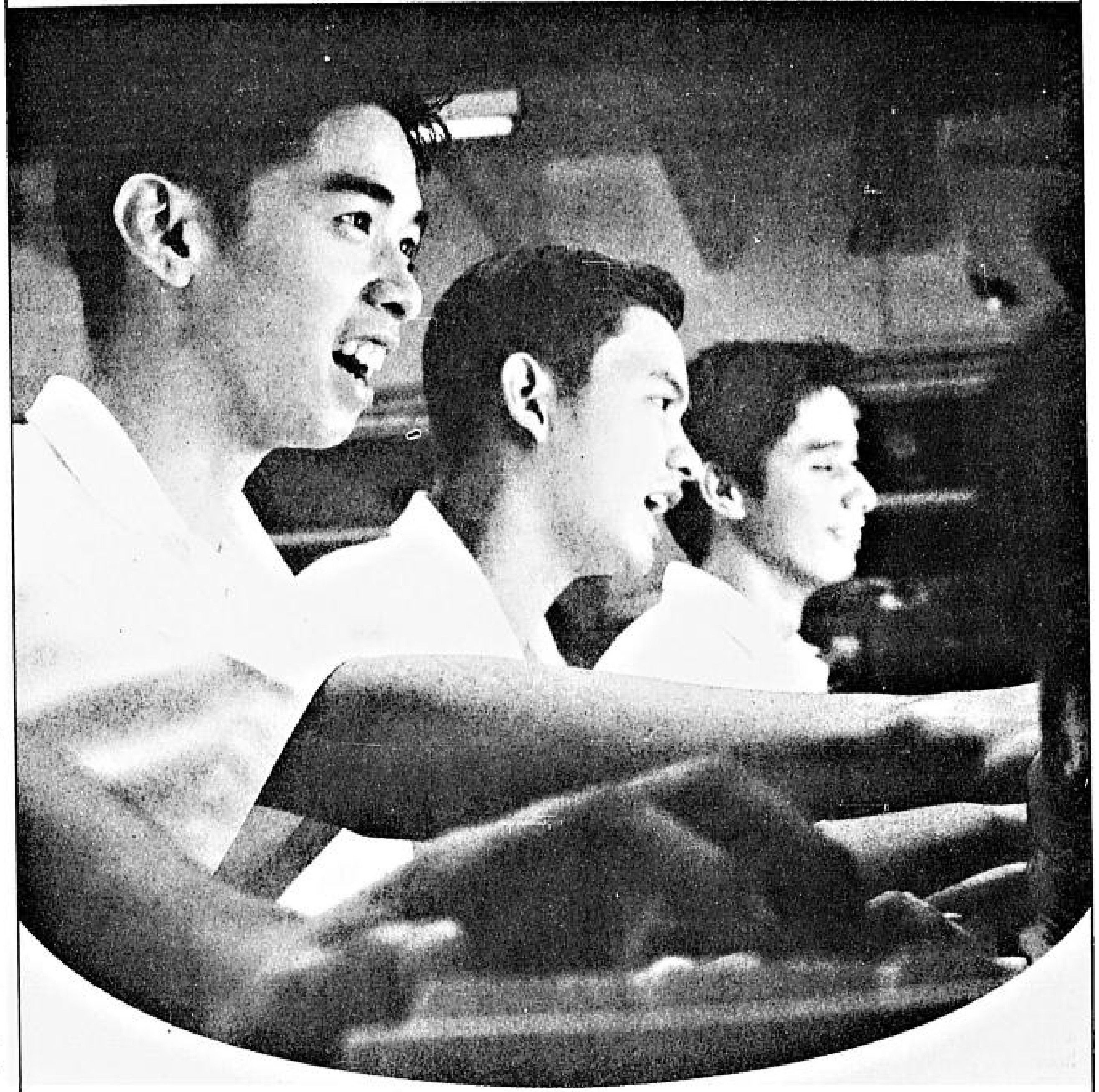
Ms Macapagal's political rivals had alleged that the budget deficit was ballooning due to her abuse of public funds to bankroll her bid for the presidency.

The President was also accused of diverting money from the reenacted budget to spending programs to boost her election chances such as the issuance of Philhealth cards bearing her image and use of the road users tax to hire thousands of street sweepers wearing government-issued T-shirts with her initials in bold letters. But the President has maintained that the use of these funds were properly disbursed based on the program.

The President said the budget gap would be her top priority if she would get a full six-year term in office and that her main solution to this chronic problem was to initiate tax reforms in Congress.

The government aims to keep the budget deficit this year to P197.8 billion or 4.2 percent of the Gross Domestic Product. Last year, the government incurred a deficit of P199.9 billion as against its target of P202 billion.

LABAN PARA SA KINABUKASAN



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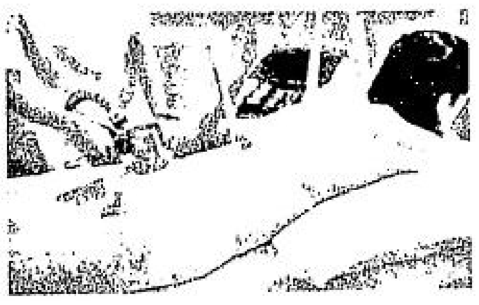

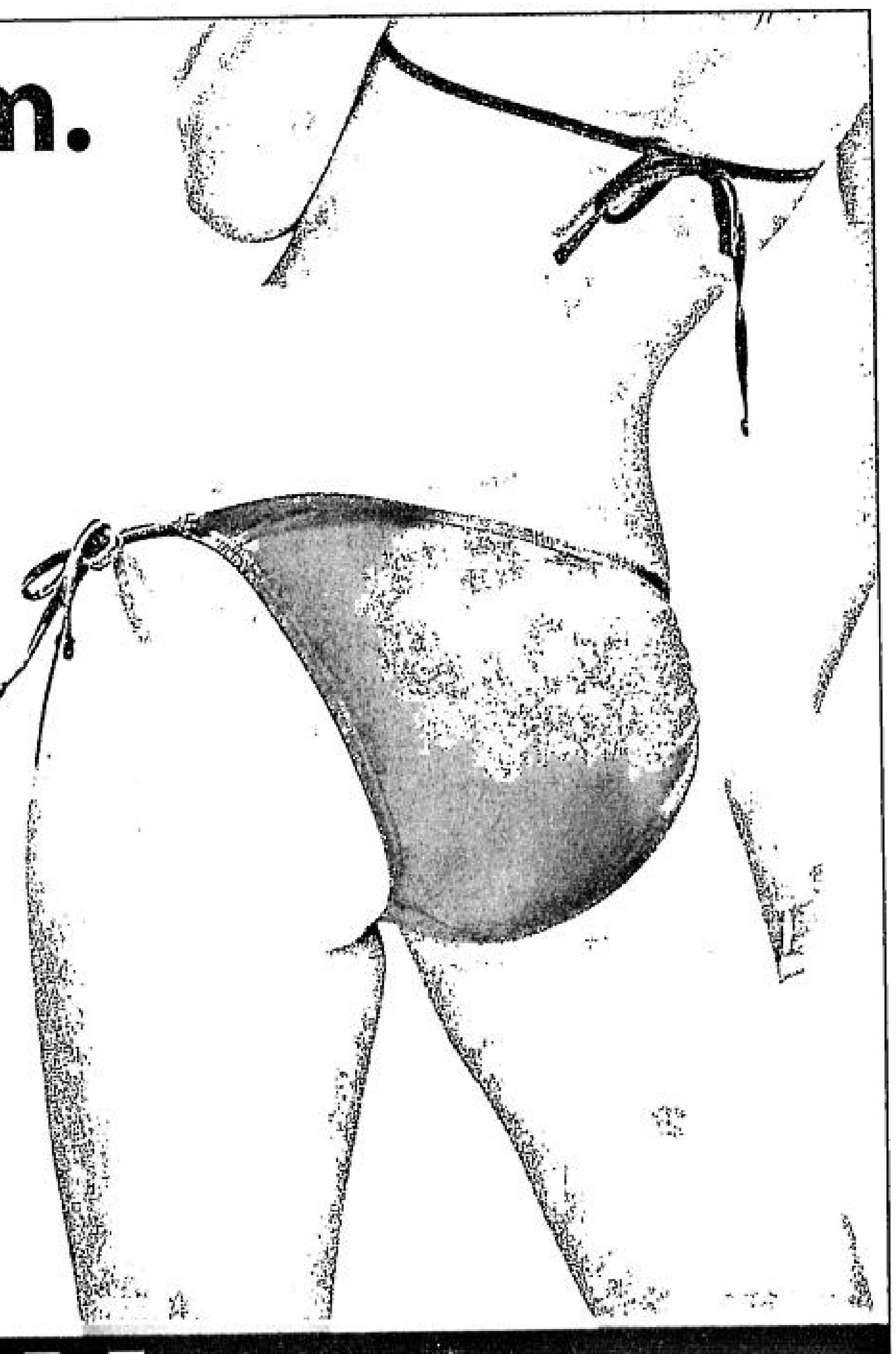

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Namfrel continues to pin blame on Tancangco

By Cynthia D. Balana

FORMER Elections Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco was no longer around for Monday's polls but the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) still blamed her for the problems encountered by voters.

Jose Concepcion, Namfrel national chair, said it was Tancangco's precinct mapping project, began in 1997, that contributed to the problem of registered voters not being able to find their names in the master list of voters provided by the Commission on Elections.

"She's retired, yes, but the damage had been done," Concepcion told the INQUIRER.

Concepcion said Tancangco wanted to place voters living in one house in the same precinct under the precinct mapping scheme. This entailed sending Comelec personnel to their houses to find out if the voters were indeed living under one roof.

Those who were not at home when the Comelec personnel came were excluded from the national list of registered voters.

This, said Concepcion, was the reason for the confusion in many precincts, as well as the disenfranchisement of voters.

Concepcion said Tancangco should have corrected this mistake by simply reconstructing the lists and returning the names of the voters which were stricken out.

Namfrel 'quick count' moving at snail's pace

From page A1

Namfrel chair Jose Concepcion said that the "quick count" was delayed after many election officers withheld the sixth copy of election returns that was supposed to go to Namfrel.

Concepcion said the text messaging system for Namfrel also bogged down due to the heavy traffic of text messages that volunteers were sending. Namfrel volunteers nationwide text the election results they gathered at the precinct level.

The latest Namfrel bulletin available as of press time yesterday was the 4 p.m. bulletin. That tally showed results from only 439 precincts or .20 percent of the 216,382 precincts nationwide.

The Namfrel still had no results from the Ilocos, Cagayan and Cordillera regions, Eastern Visayas and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. There were also no results from overseas voters.

Concepcion said the Namfrel count in past elections had been much faster than this year's.

"We have had some problems and among the problems we are addressing is texting. We probably underestimated the load of people who are texting and if you are in a province, you have limitations precisely so you have to cue. So you have to wait for your turn," he said.

Namfrel volunteers in far-flung provinces also had to go to urban areas where there are cell sites to be able to text in the results, according to Concepcion.

But his men, he said, had taken remedial measures such as asking volunteers to tabulate the results using the Microsoft Excel program and to send them through the Internet.

Concepcion said that Namfrel officials were counter-checking the tallies being done in the field before these were posted on the big screen at La Salle, Greenhils.

Catch up

Still, Concepcion expressed confidence that Namfrel would be able to catch up in its tabulation in two days and complete its task in seven days.

It took Namfrel 10 minutes before midnight the other day to release its initial tabulation for president, vice president, and senatorial candidates.

Among the areas where Namfrel was experiencing difficulties in retrieving the sixth copy of the returns were Ilocos Norte, Rizal, Antipolo, Jolo in Sulu, Romblon, and some areas in Las Piñas and Pasig.

In Ilocos Norte, Concepcion said, Rep. Imee Marcos was asking for the Namfrel copy, prompting Namfrel secretary general Guillermo Luz to file a protest with the Commission on Elections.

Adamantly against

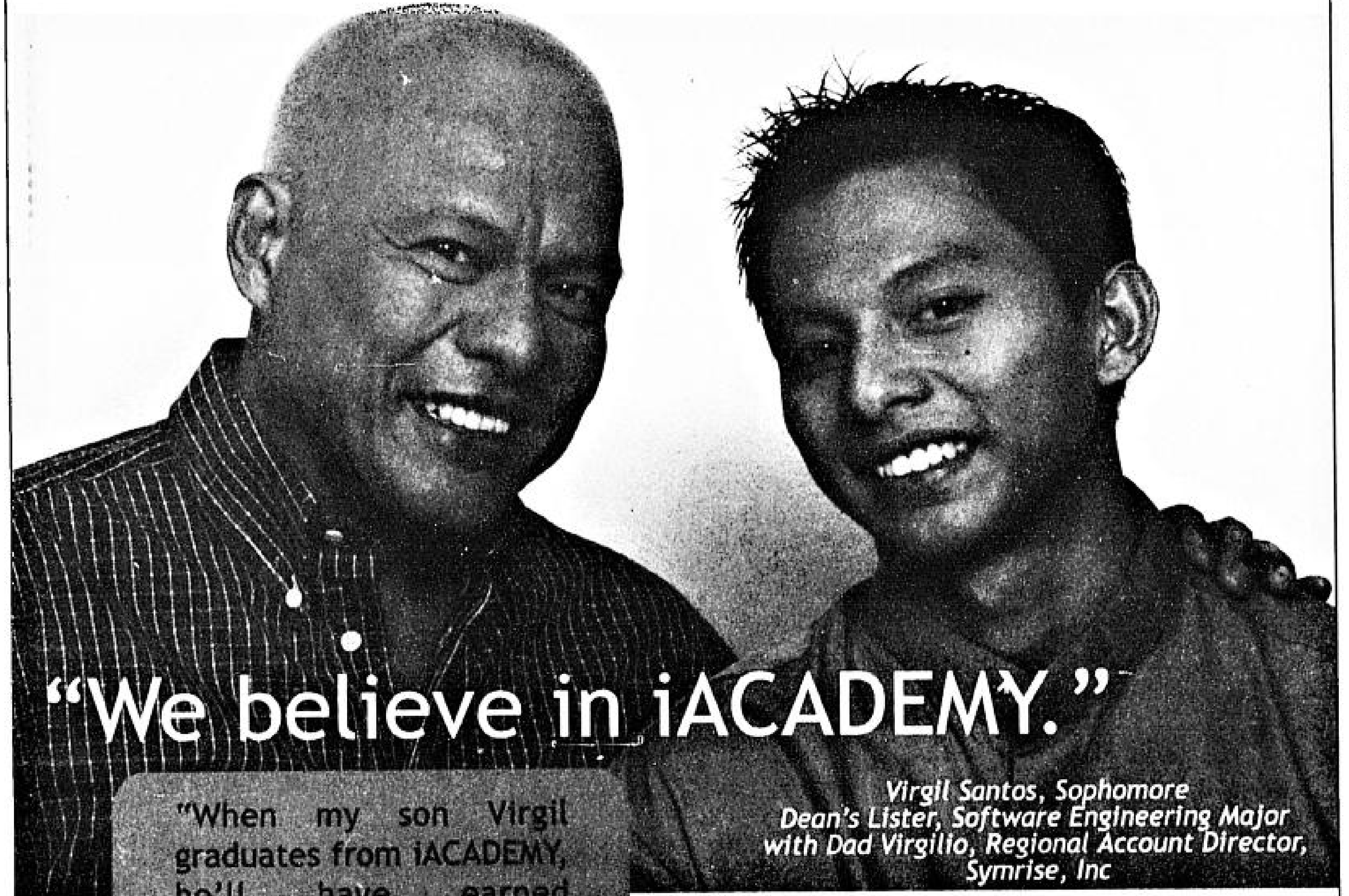
In Jolo where returns from 3,000 precincts were being counted at Notre Dame, the Jolo Public School and the military compound, Namfrel volunteers could not easily come in to collect the copy.

Other teachers also wanted all the envelopes containing the returns to be brought first to the municipal hall before giving Namfrel its copy.

"We were adamantly against this because in transit, something can happen," Concepcion said.

He called on the election provincial and regional directors to ensure that Namfrel gets its copy.

Concepcion said he had asked Education Undersecretary Chito Gascon to deploy superintendents of private schools throughout the country and to impress upon the teachers the need to give the sixth copy to Namfrel.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Stars bright, stars dim . . .

From page A1

result met our expectations."

Santos, who is up against three opponents, said she was leading the mayoral race by 64 to 65 percent.

"I think the biggest plus factor here was the fact that we never lashed out at any rival candidate throughout the campaign," Santos said. "We simply stuck with promoting our 10-point agenda."

Kilusan ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP) senatorial candidate Ernesto Maceda earlier was reported to have lashed out at Santos, calling her "*pandak ng* Lipa" after she reportedly disapproved the issuance of a rally permit to the KNP in Batangas.

Mark Lapid, son of senatorial candidate Lito Lapid, was leading in the race for Pampanga governor. Mark and Kris Aquino had admitted that they were dating.

Mark's father, an action star himself, was governor of Pampanga for three terms. In the senatorial contest, he was in the ninth slot, according to the partial, unofficial results yesterday.

Mark said that despite his expectations to the contrary, he was leading incumbent Representatives Juan Pablo Bondoc and Zenaida Ducut even in their own districts.

"I never thought that the votes in my favor would turn out to be this big," the young Lapid said yesterday. "But the counting is still ongoing. In the meantime, I'm monitoring the counting here at home."

In Caloocan, former action star Rey Malonzo, who has been the city's mayor for three terms and who is running for congressman of the first district of the city, was trailing Oscar Malapitan.

Malonzo's alleged manipulation of campaign activities apparently did not help his and his wife's political bid. His wife, Gigi, ran for Caloocan mayor.

In Quezon City, singer and former Councilor Dingdong Avanzado failed to unseat fellow actor and incumbent Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista.

Several newspapers quoted Bautista as saying he was hurt by Avanzado's decision to run against him.

Former Quezon City Mayor Ismael Mathay picked Avanzado as his running mate after action star Rudy Fernandez withdrew to avoid running against Bautista. Bautista was Fernandez's running mate when the latter ran for mayor in the May 2001 election. Fernandez lost while Bautista won the post of vice mayor.

Still in Quezon City, reelectionist Councilor Aiko Melendez of the second district was trailing Winston Castelo.

The actress broke up with husband Jomari Yllana and last year was engaged in a vicious word war with Yllana's current girlfriend, actress Ara Mina.

In February, Yllana asked the Quezon City Regional Trial Court to cite Melendez for indirect contempt for preventing him from visiting their son. The case was settled out of court.

Yllana's elder brother, Anjo Yllana, apparently is faring better than his former sister-in-law Melendez. The comedian and TV host seemed a winner in the race for vice mayor in Parañaque City.

Former actor Matt Ranillo III, a candidate for congressman of the second district of Zamboanga del Norte, told the INQUIRER he was in a neck-and-neck battle with incumbent Rep. Roseller Barinaga.

But he added he was still awaiting the election results in Dipolog City, where the Commission on Elections had ordered a recount of roughly 600 votes, and Sindangan, where the Comelec had ordered that another voting be held in two weeks.

"The elections here were relatively peaceful," said Ranillo, "except perhaps for the attempt to sabotage my campaign. My security personnel saw a leak in my car's gas tank. "It's good they protected me."

In Manila, also showing a winning edge were incumbent Councilor Isko Moreno, who was running second in Manila's second district; Robert Ortega, who placed second in the fifth district; and Cita Astals, sixth also in the fifth district.

Dimming stars

Stars who were not shining as brightly were mayoral candidate Sonny Parsons, former member of the macho group Hagibis, who was trailing incumbent Mayor Marides C. Fernandez in Marikina and former "TGIS" star Red Sternberg, who is running for councilor in Pasay City.

Actor and former "That's Entertainment" member Jestoni Alarcon, who is running for vice governor of Rizal province, was still closely watching the counting.

"*Tutok ang mga tao ko sa bilangan para walang mangyaring dayaan*," said Alarcon, who ran under Raul Roco's party, Aksyon Demokratiko. "I'm very happy with the initial results. *Sana, magtuloy-tuloy.*"

Alarcon was a town councilor of Cainta, Rizal.

Of movie stars who have not been as lucky in their political bids, Alarcon said, "*Malaking factor ang pagiging artista pero nasa tao 'yan talaga kung iboboto ka o hindi. 'Wag lang mawalan ng pag-asa. There'll be another chance kung gusto pang tumakbo ulit.* Work hard. Reach out to the people."

If the May 10 elections taught award-winning actor Jay Manalo anything, it is that his place is really in show business. Manalo lost in his bid to be a councilor in Manila's second district.

Manalo said in a text message to his handler, Chino Sarenas, "It's true, I lost *pero OK lang*."

"But he's not closing his door to running again for public office," Sarenas said. "He said that he'd know what to do next time."

Former stage actor and comedian Lou Veloso had been elected councilor of Manila's sixth district three times. This time, he was running for Congress and apparently will not make it.

He was third among four contenders as of yesterday. "*Nag-decide ang tao na piliin 'yung mga nagbigay ng panandaliang ginhawa*," he said. "But I have no regrets. I gave my best."

As in the past three elections, Veloso is staying in a monastery in Malaybalay, Bukidnon, and will be back in Manila on Sunday. He plans to be active again in show business.

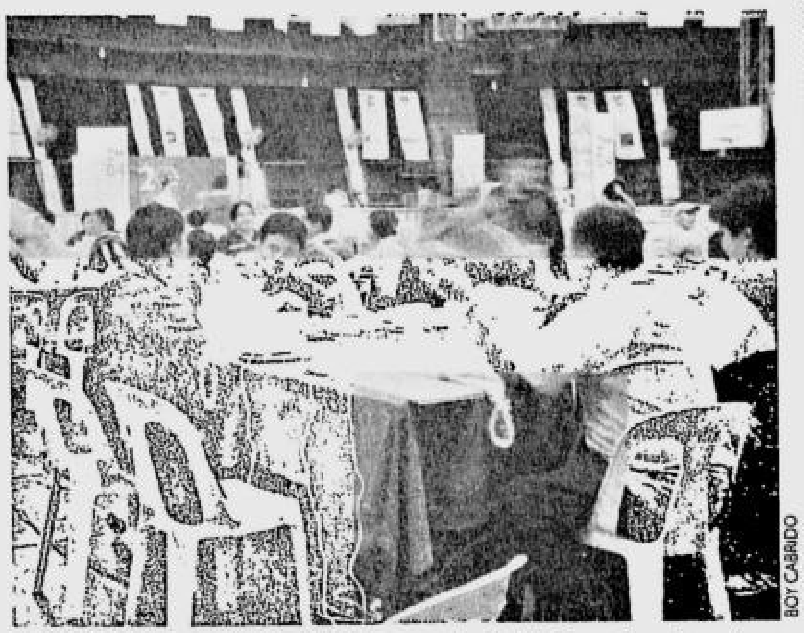
Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez has apparently learned his lesson.

Last year, he engaged TV host Kris Aquino in a drawn-out and very public feud after the lovers broke up. This time, he knew when to give up and conceded defeat to former National Security Adviser Roilo Golez in the race for congressman of Parañaque's second district, early Tuesday morning.

Marquez's former wife of 12 years, actress Alma Moreno, was not as ready to accept defeat in the Parañaque contest for mayor, a position that her ex-husband had occupied for nine years. As of yesterday, the independent and first-time candidate Moreno was a poor third to front-runner Pablo Olivarez.

Marquez supported Olivarez's candidacy.

In other parts of the country, other candidates from show business fared far better than Marquez and Moreno.



BOY CABRIDO

VOLUNTEERS man Namfrel phones at its Quick Count headquarters at La Salle Greenhills, San Juan.

Bloodiest ...

From page A1

In the 2001 elections, 111 died in political violence, the military said. Eighty-seven were killed in the 1998 presidential polls, 83 in the 1995 elections and 56 in 1992.

Marcos years

The death toll in this year's campaign even surpassed the number of people killed during the snap elections held in 1986 during the tumultuous last weeks of Ferdinand Marcos' dictatorship.

INQUIRER records showed 93 people were killed in the 1986 campaign.

The military has recorded 153 poll-related incidents this year compared to 221 in 2001 and 295 in 1998.

"There are fewer incidents this year but apparently these incidents are deadlier," AFP Public Information Office chief Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero told the INQUIRER.

Most of the violence this year has been blamed on private armed groups employed by local politicians. These groups allegedly included communist guerrillas hired to protect some politicians in Masbate, the military said.

Senior military and election officials had earlier described Monday's elections as "relatively peaceful."

AFP warns against violence

The military warned against violence or massive protests linked to the elections and said it would use "necessary force" to maintain order if losing parties tried to stir up trouble.

The 113,000-strong military remains on high alert and "will not hesitate to implement its plan and employ the necessary force to maintain tranquility and order, particularly in Metropolitan Manila," the Associated Press quoted Lucero as saying.

A military unit is on standby in Metro Manila to counter any attempt to organize huge protests and troops have secured power lines to prevent outages that could disrupt vote-counting, Lucero said.

Mistaken identity

In the latest incident, a policeman was shot and wounded yesterday in an apparent case of mistaken identity in Tubao, La Union.

The shooting caused panic among government employees, election officials and residents at the town hall, where the canvass of votes was taking place.

Police said PO2 Fredelito Mabalot, an aide of Mayor Violeta Verceles, was shot in the abdomen after soldiers mistook him for an armed civilian.

The latest Camp Aguinaldo death tally included three more people killed on election day.

Ballots protected

Two militiamen died while a teacher and a soldier were wounded when communist rebels attempted to snatch a ballot box in a hinterland village of Kabasalan, Zamboanga Sibugay, the military said.

The unnamed teacher and the escorts were walking toward the town center carrying the ballot box when the rebels fired on them.

"Our men managed to protect the ballot box but two of them died," said Maj. Gen. Trifonio Salazar, commander of the Army's 1st Infantry Division.

In Matnog, Sorsogon, a soldier was killed when a boat carrying a military team and poll officials was fired upon by suspected communist rebels.

The rebels retreated after a brief firefight and the ballots were secured, the military said.

Reserves called to duty

In Barcelona town, a policeman guarding a precinct was accidentally killed when he slipped and his gun went off, the bullet hitting him in the head, police said.

Goltiao said reserve officers in all provinces and regions would be activated to assist election officers until the last ballot was counted.

Each region has a reserve equivalent to a battalion—about 400 to 500 men—while provinces each have a company of about 90 men.

The reserves will back the regular police and military contingent in securing the transfer of ballot boxes and the areas where votes are canvassed, Goltiao said.

"We need to see to it that all votes will be counted," he said.

The PNP said it was particularly wary of rival candidates' supporters who usually trigger the violence.

Goltiao said politicians themselves could help prevent violence by entering into peace covenants with one another.

Sportsmanship would be a big help, he said.

"The good thing to do is to concede if a candidate has lost already," Goltiao said. "The elections were peaceful and credible so there's no reason for losing candidates not to concede."

Goltiao said Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez's act of conceding defeat to the former National Security Adviser Roilo Golez before the vote count was finished was the act of a "true gentleman."

5 cops face ax

Five more police officers are facing relief for their alleged involvement in partisan political activities.

Chief Insp. Danilo Lubaton, SPO2 Florencio Ramos, SPO1 Alfredo Benito, PO2 Luisito Animas and SPO1 Mario Quiambao are alleged to have supported Antipolo's reelectionist Mayor Angelito Gatlabayan.

PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. earlier announced the relief of two police colonels for a similar violation. He did not specify how the colonels engaged in partisanship.

Lubaton and company, along with Sgt. Edgar Villanueva and nine civilians, were caught with high-powered firearms on Sumulong Highway in Antipolo on Monday afternoon.

The rest of the suspects were identified as Dioscarro Palagani, Hermenigildo Trecenio, Wilson Ocampo, Marinao Ponce, Jonathan Alcantara, Pablito Beltran, Ben Parado, Sandy Sabanal, and Abraham Samson.

The group was on board three vehicles when they were flagged down by the city police and the provincial mobile group.

Seized from the suspects were two M-16 rifles, four .45 cal. pistols, two .38 cal. revolvers and ammunition.

Stern order

All 15 suspects were charged with violating the election gun ban.

Goltiao expressed doubt that the five policemen facing relief would actually be punished for purportedly making their services available to a candidate.

Ebdane, himself accused of being a President Macapagal-Arroyo loyalist, has issued a stern order to his men to arrest all policemen engaging in partisan politics.

"It's very hard to file a case of partisanship," Goltiao said, explaining that officers should be caught distributing campaign materials for a candidate or threatening supporters of a rival politician.

Goltiao said police were still investigating if Lubaton and the four policemen had any official business to be with the other heavily armed men. *With reports from Gia Damaso-Dumo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Marlon Ramos, Joyce Mejillano, Michael Jaucian and Niño Jesus Orbeta, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Jeffrey M. Tupas, Rosa-May V. de Guzman, Rex G. Ortega, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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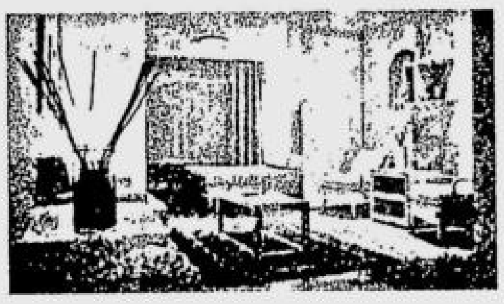

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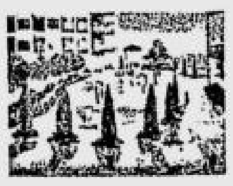

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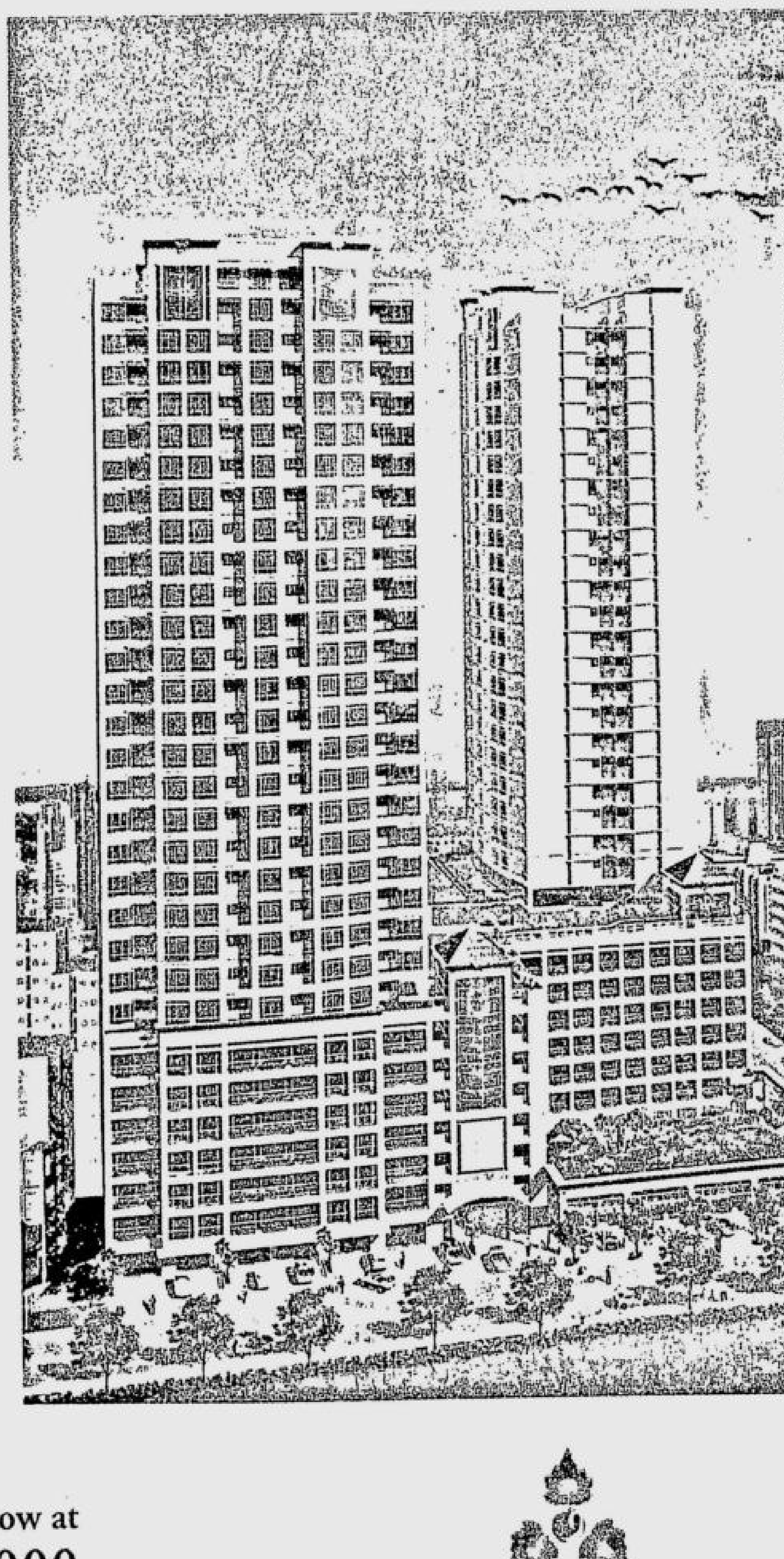

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Japanese immigration guard, Pinay sentenced for fake marriage

TOKYO—A former Japanese immigration bureau security guard and his Philippine girlfriend were given suspended three-year jail terms for faking a marriage intended to extend her stay here, a court said Tuesday.

The Tokyo District Court handed down three-year jail terms suspended for five years each to Takashi Iwaki, 28, and a 40-year-old female Philippine bar worker for falsifying public documents and assisting an immigration violation.

Iwaki, a guard for the Tokyo Immigration Bureau, was dating the woman in March 2002 when her visa ran out.

They then lived together for a year in his apartment in Tochigi prefecture, some 150 kilometers (95 miles) north of Tokyo, and later registered a marriage certificate using the name of a friend of the Philippine woman.

The woman, who was identified only by the Japanese rendering of her name as De Hesusu Abudulia Karupio, would probably be detained and then deported. *AFP*

PNP says Reds netted only ₱10M in campaign fees

By Christian Esguerra

FOR ALL their threats and show of force, the communist New People's Army amassed a measly P10 million in permit-to-campaign (PTC) 'fees extorted mostly from local candidates in the last elections, the Philippine National Police reported.

Collected in 10 regions, the total was way below the amounts the NPA used to get in previous campaigns, according to police intelligence director Robert Delfin.

The rebels, he said, made between P30 million and P50 million in each of the elections since 1992.

Delfin said the NPA's collection of permit-to-campaign fees this time was apparently hampered by the intensive operations mounted by police and the military against them, particularly in their perceived strongholds in the countryside.

"The fact that they got only that much should show the group is not as strong as it pretends to be," Delfin told the INQUIRER yesterday.

The 8,000-strong guerrilla band resorted to fierce attacks on government and civilian positions immediately after the start of the election season on Dec. 15, 2003.

Show of force

The authorities saw the attacks as a desperate "show of force," considering the NPA's purportedly dwindling membership.

Former top NPA leaders estimated its membership at just between 5,000 and 6,000 today, according to Delfin.

True enough, the communist guerrillas barely made good on their promise to make a fortune in PTC fees this campaign period.

As of May 6, the NPA had demanded a total of P6,920,000 from local candidates—but it got more with a total of P10,013,00.

The single biggest amount extorted was in the Caraga region in Eastern Mindanao, an NPA-infested area where the communists got P5,050,000, according to the PNP report.

Politicians in Bicol, another perceived NPA stronghold, and in the Calabarzon region in Southern Luzon paid up a combined total of P3.6 million.

Candidates in the Ilocos, Cordillera, Central Luzon, Mimaropa and Western Visayas shelled out a combined P1,363,000, the PNP said.

The police said the rebels neither demanded nor collected campaign fees from candidates in Central Visayas, the Zamboanga peninsula and Northern Mindanao. But it received logistics support in the form of equipment from candidates in Northern Mindanao, the PNP said.

Aside from money, the rebels also accepted campaign fees in the form of guns and other goods.

They reportedly got at least 15 M-16 rifles, three pistols, 16 pieces of communications equipment, two computers, 40 sacks of rice and canned goods in the Ilocos, Cagayan, Cordillera, Central Luzon, Calabarzon and Eastern Visayas.

Delfin said most of the candidates who bowed to NPA pressure were running for local positions. But he did not discount the possibility that some senatorial candidates may have paid PTC fees to be able to campaign in NPA-infested areas.

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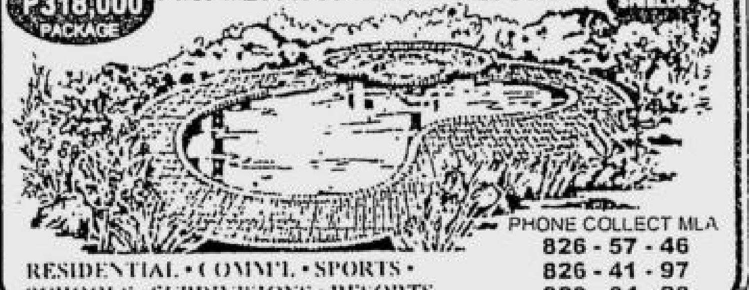

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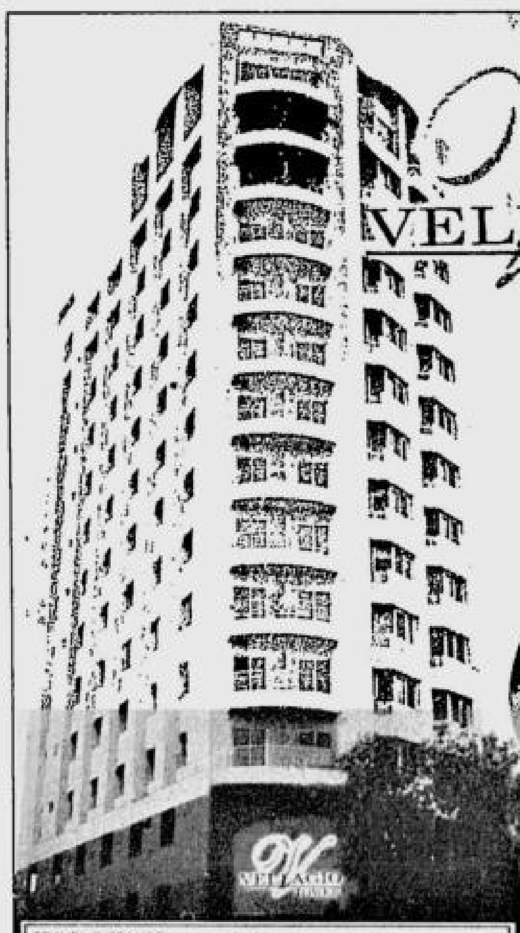

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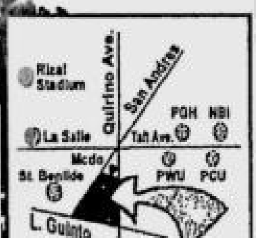

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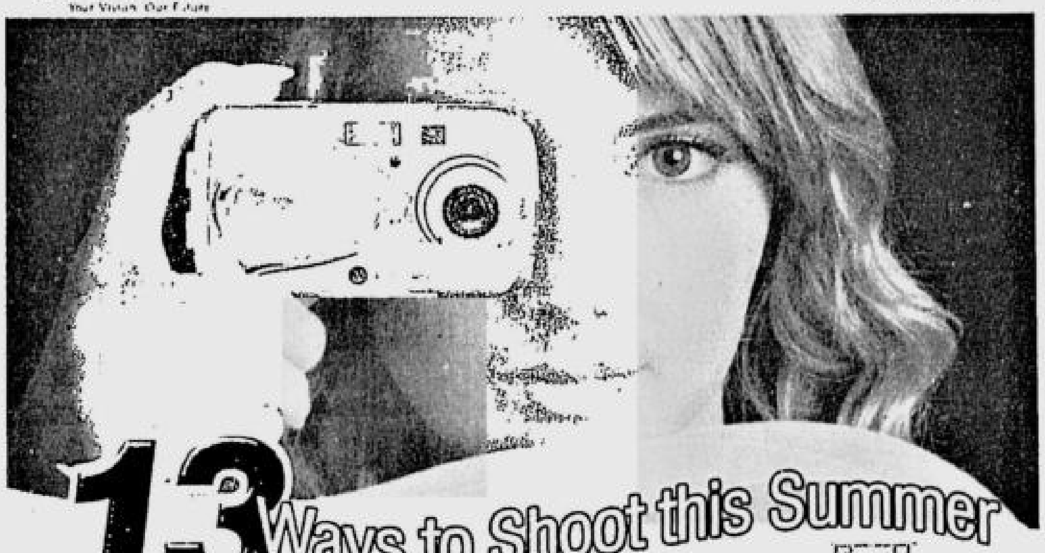

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SAN MIGUEL CASE

Gov't going for Danding's 20%

COJUANGCO

GOVERNMENT prosecutors said they are optimistic that the government may eventually get control of the 20 percent block of San Miguel Corp. shares still being held by SMC chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

According to Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio, this was the sentiment of Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo who, while still solicitor general, formulated the strategy to secure the return of the contested 27 percent SMC shares to the government.

"He is optimistic that we will get that 20 percent SMC share as well," said Villa-Ignacio who said he had a talk with Marcelo early yesterday. The Ombudsman is not known to give media interviews.

"He feels very proud about what they achieved. His strategy was proven correct with the issuance of the partial summary judgment," Villa-Ignacio said.

Last Friday, the Sandiganbayan issued a partial summary judgment of the 17-year litigation over the coconut levy funds, awarding the disputed 27 percent block of SMC shares to the government in trust for coconut farmers.

The shares were part of a 47 percent block of SMC shares that the Presidential Commission on Good Government sequestered in 1986, claiming that they had been acquired with funds from the coco levy imposed by the Marcos dictatorship and illegally controlled by Cojuangco and other Marcos cronies.

The decision, however, did not cover the 20 percent block of shares still held by Cojuangco who controls the 15-seat SMC board.

The PCGG has been battling Cojuangco in the Sandiganbayan for the past 17 years in at least eight cases involving the shares in SMC and various businesses allegedly acquired using the levy funds.

Earlier, PCGG head Haydee Yorac said the commission would be using the same arguments that won last Friday's Sandiganbayan decision in going after the 20 percent block of shares.

Armand Nocum

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, May 12, 2004
5th Week of Easter

1st Reading:	Acts 15:1-6
Gospel:	Jn 15:1-8

Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the true vine and my Father is the vinegrower. If any of my branches doesn't bear fruit, he breaks it off; and he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, that it may bear even more fruit.

"You are already made clean by the word I have spoken to you; live in me as I live in you. The branch cannot bear fruit by itself but has to remain part of the vine; so neither can you if you don't remain in me.

"I am the vine and you are the branches. As long as you remain in me and I in you, you bear much fruit; but apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not remain in me is thrown away as they do with branches and they wither. Then they are gathered and thrown into the fire and burned.

"If you remain in me and my words in you, you may ask whatever you want and it will be given to you. My Father is glorified when you bear much fruit: it is then that you become my disciples."

Commentary

Does society exist for the benefit of its members, as Herbert Spencer believed, or the members for the benefit of society? If you say the first, you seem to be setting the stage for complete individualism; but if you say the second are you not sponsoring fascism? So which is it going to be?

We spontaneously assume that questions are perfectly clear and correctly put, and that only answers can be true or false. (This assumption may have something to do with early schooling.) But there can be false questions, and the question above is surely false. It is like asking whether your head is for the benefit of your body, or your body for the benefit of your head. In a living organism everything is for the benefit of everything else. The question assumes a false opposition.

St. Paul said Jesus is the head of his body, the Church; he is the head, we the bodily members (see Col 1:18). We cannot be divided from the head and retain any life at all. Nor can a member separated from the body remain alive. A living body is an organism, not a collection of parts. We have to be careful about the images we use to describe the Church. False separations creep in subtly. The image in today's reading is even more striking than Paul's: a vine and its branches. Unlike a tree, where you can distinguish clearly between trunk and branches, the vine is just all branches! "I am the vine and you are the branches": the vine is the branches!

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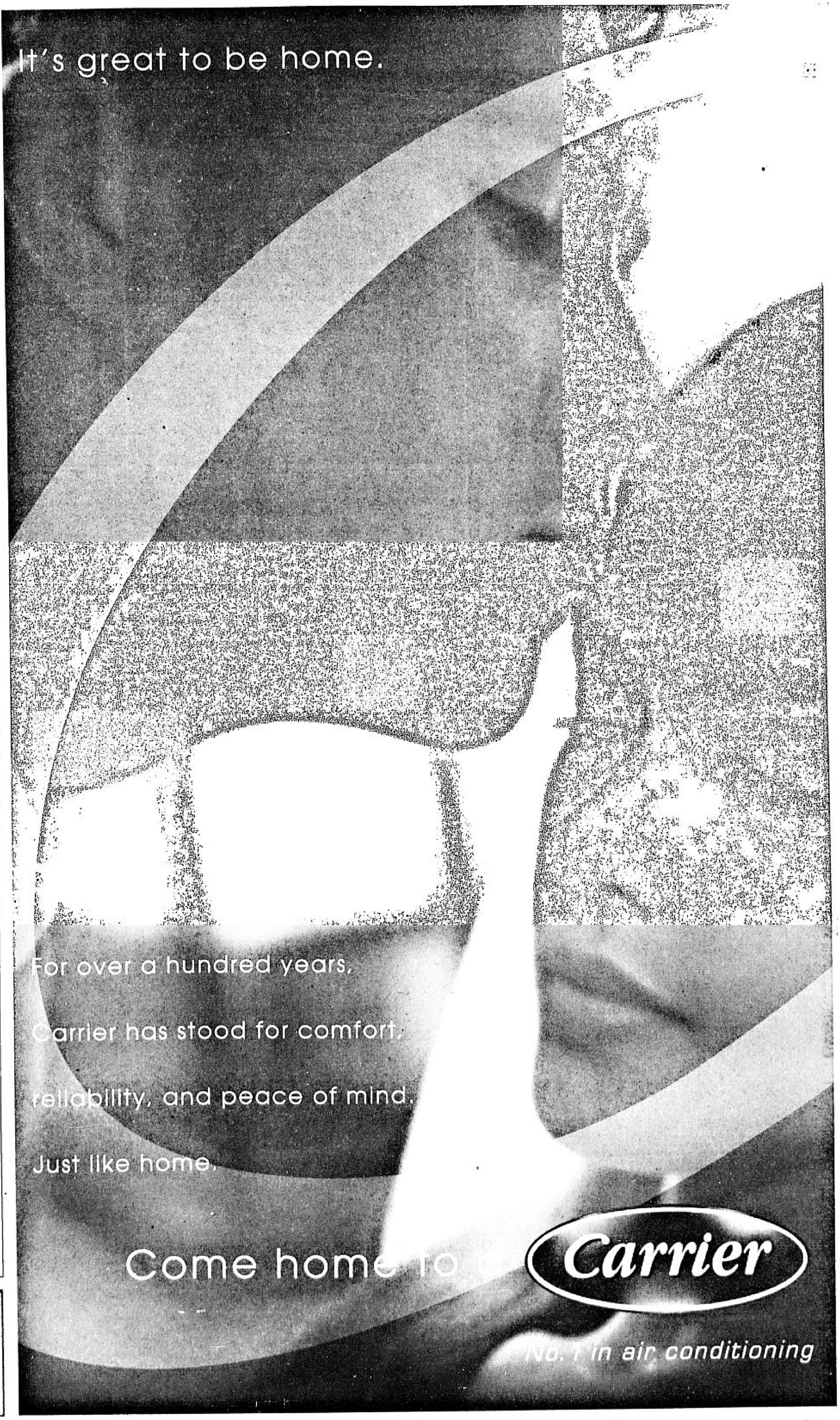
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Volunteerism impresses Afghan election observers

By Philip C. Tubeza

A TEAM of election observers flew in from war-torn Afghanistan to watch and learn from last Monday's elections.

The 10 members, representatives of different civil society groups in their country, were amazed at the large number of volunteer poll watchers and the even larger turnout of women who voted.

Afghanistan will have its first election in September after almost 30 years of civil war, foreign occupation and dictatorship.

Mohammad Aslam Naim, a member of the team, said they wanted to apply the lessons they've learned in their own elections in September.

"(Being here) is helpful for us. We will try our best in our own (elections)," he said. "We should also have an independent poll watchdog so our elections are clean."

Yesterday, the team visited the National Citizen's Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) quick count center at La Salle Greenhills and were briefed on its operations.

On Monday, they visited a poll precinct in San Juan and were impressed by the "orderly" elections.

"I like your electoral system. It's very organized," said Mohammad Kabuli, another team member.

"There were plenty of volunteer workers. It shows the (high level of) interest of the people," said Kabuli's colleague Mir Amanuddin.

Kabuli hopes his own countrymen would volunteer to become poll watchers in their election. He observed, "The majority of voters (in the San Juan precinct) were women. That is very interesting for me."

Afghan women have equal rights with men and they can vote, Kabuli added, but the fundamentalists have opposed the registration of female voters.

"I learned a lot from Philippine women. They are very brave at work. I hope our people will work like this," said Shekiba Broumand, 23, a female team member.

She was impressed that most of the poll officials were female school teachers.

Afghan women are just starting to get to know their rights after years of oppression under the Taliban, an Islamic fundamentalist group that ruled the country until the Americans overthrew them.

For Broumand and female friends her age, it will be their first time to vote in September. "We're very excited," she said. "(Philippine) elections are fair and free. We also want free and fair elections in Afghanistan."

5 suspects in Boracay slays freed

By Christian Esguerra

THE FIVE prime suspects in the grisly Boracay murders have been released for lack of sufficient evidence, police said yesterday.

Supt. Remus Zacharias Canieso, chief of the Boracay Special Protection Unit, said authorities had to release the suspects in compliance with the 48-hour prescription for the detention of crime suspects. Keeping them beyond that period would get police into trouble.

Investigators had apparently yet to gather sufficient evidence to file murder charges against the five who all used to work for slain German businessman Anton Faustenhauser.

The 60-year-old Faustenhauser, and his friends—Swiss Manfred Schoeni and Briton John Cowperthwait—and his maid Erma Sarmiento were all found dead with multiple stab wounds in the morning of May 2.

Canieso said the five suspects were placed under the watch of barangay officials so they could be made available in case investigators have firmed up the case against them.

"We can summon them back anytime," he told the INQUIRER in a phone interview. "We're just gathering more evidence. We want to make sure that the case that we will be filing against them will be solid."

The five laborers became the prime suspects after they gave conflicting statements during questioning, said Supt. Odelardo Magayanes, Aklan provincial police chief.

Magayanes said investigators also got hold of a key witness who claimed she saw the suspects leaving the vicinity of Faustenhauser's three-story mansion in Sitio Bulabog hours before the murder was discovered.

The witness remains under police custody.

Police initially invited for questioning a total of 20 men hours after the murder. All of them had been tapped by the German victim to work on a construction in his Bulabog property.

Faustenhauser was then expanding the villa to accommodate more guests.

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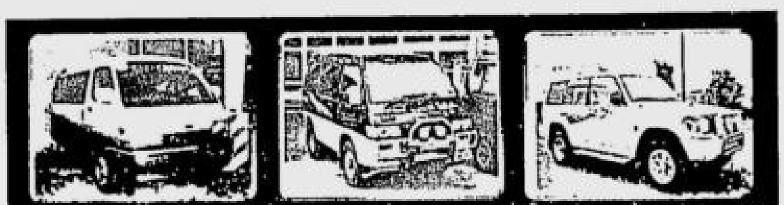

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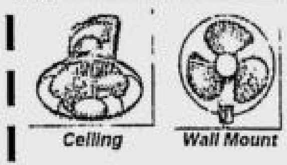

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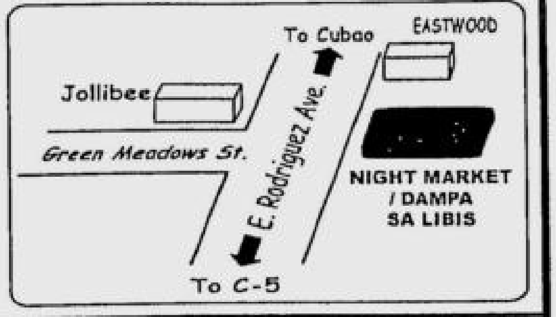

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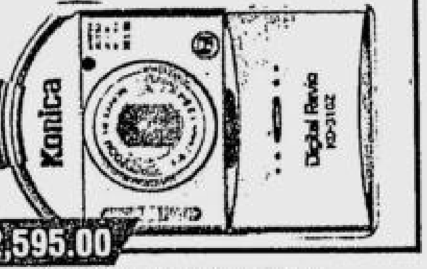

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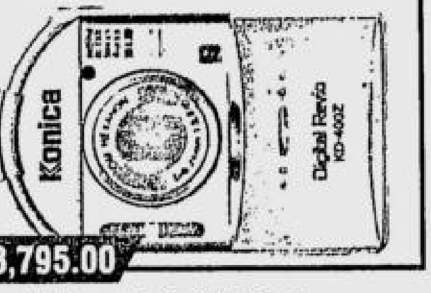

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Volunteerism impresses Afghan election observers

By Philip C. Tubeza

A TEAM of election observers flew in from war-torn Afghanistan to watch and learn from last Monday's elections.

The 10 members, representatives of different civil society groups in their country, were amazed at the large number of volunteer poll watchers and the even larger turnout of women who voted.

Afghanistan will have its first election in September after almost 30 years of civil war, foreign occupation and dictatorship.

Mohammad Aslam Naim, a member of the team, said they wanted to apply the lessons they've learned in their own elections in September.

"(Being here) is helpful for us. We will try our best in our own (elections)," he said. "We should also have an independent poll watchdog so our elections are clean."

Yesterday, the team visited the National Citizen's Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) quick count center at La Salle Greenhills and were briefed on its operations.

On Monday, they visited a poll precinct in San Juan and were impressed by the "orderly" elections.

"I like your electoral system. It's very organized," said Mohammad Kabuli, another team member.

"There were plenty of volunteer workers. It shows the (high level of) interest of the people," said Kabuli's colleague Mir Amanuddin.

Kabuli hopes his own countrymen would volunteer to become poll watchers in their election. He observed, "The majority of voters (in the San Juan precinct) were women. That is very interesting for me."

Afghan women have equal rights with men and they can vote, Kabuli added, but the fundamentalists have opposed the registration of female voters.

"I learned a lot from Philippine women. They are very brave at work. I hope our people will work like this," said Shekiba Broumand, female team member.

She was impressed that most of the poll officials were female school teachers.

Afghan women are just starting to get to know their rights after years of oppression under the Taliban, an Islamic fundamentalist group that ruled the country until the Americans overthrew them.

For Broumand and female friends her age, it will be their first time to vote in September. "We're very excited," she said. "(Philippine) elections are fair and free. We also want free and fair elections in Afghanistan."

5 suspects in Boracay slays freed

By Christian Esguerra

THE FIVE prime [illegible] pects in the gr[illegible] Boracay murder[illegible] have been released [illegible] lack of sufficien[illegible] dence [illegible] poi[illegible] yesterday.

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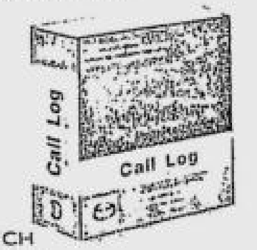

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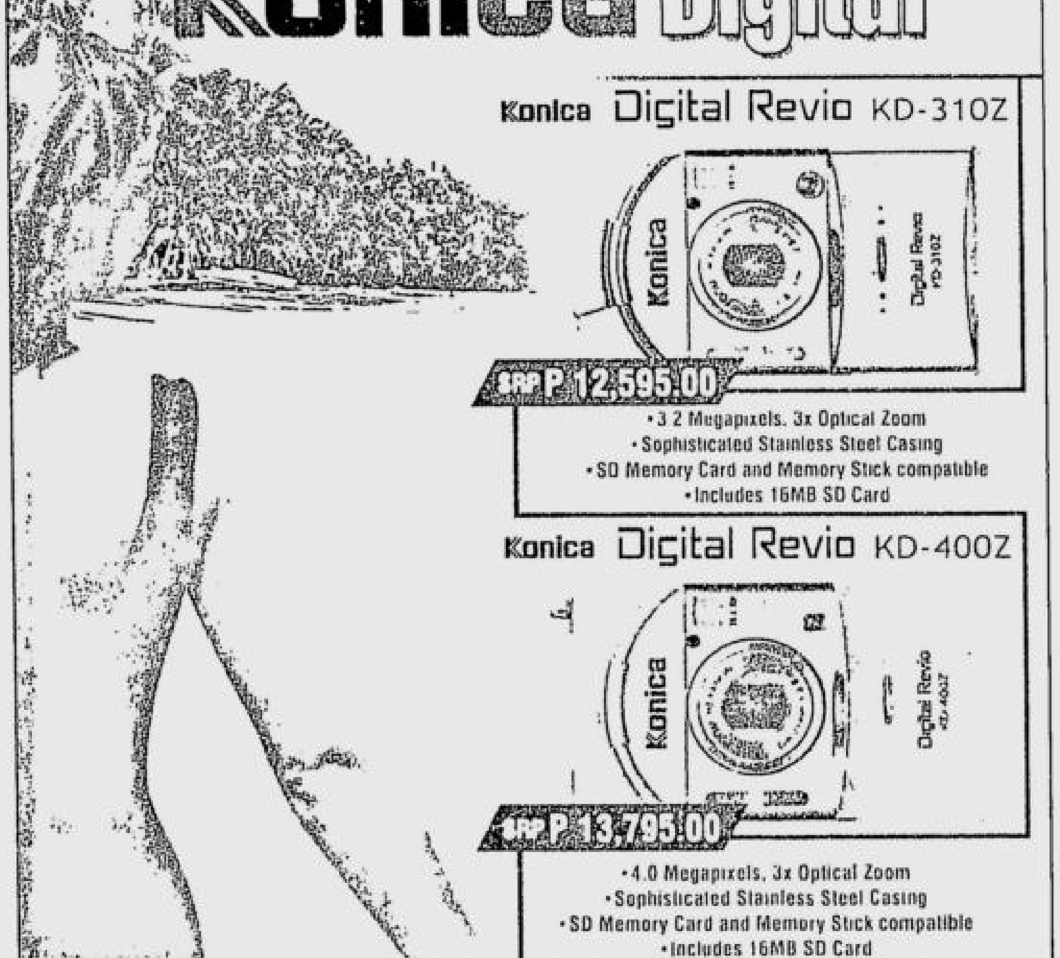
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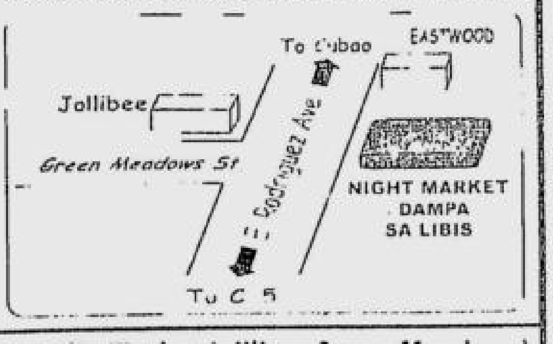

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Bro. Eddie only 3rd in own quick count

By Blanche S. Rivera

THIS must be the only quick count operation by a political party showing its own candidate lagging behind.

The Bangon Pilipinas party of presidential candidate Bro. Eddie Villanueva started its own quick count yesterday, and as of 2 p. m. showed Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino standard bearer Fernando Poe Jr. leading the presidential race.

Villanueva was often placed third or fourth in his party's own count.

However, Bangon campaign operations officer Dong Cucio said that the results of any quick count, whether its own or the ones being done by certain information technology schools and television networks, did not indicate the winner in the elections.

Only about eight percent of all returns from the precincts have been included in the unofficial quick counts, he said.

"It is too early to say if there is a trend. As for us, we will do our best to ensure that our votes are counted because many boards of election inspectors do not know that an "Eddie" vote should be counted for Bro. Eddie Villanueva," Cucio said in a phone interview.

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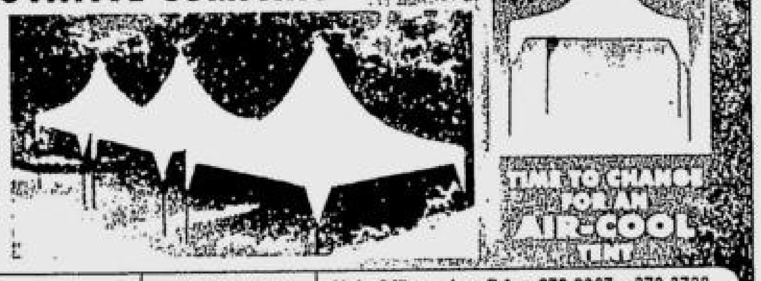

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FPJ angry; GMA glows

From page A1

EDWIN BACASMAS

VICTORY parade, FPJ supporters call their rally at Ayala and Paseo de Roxas denouncing the Macapagal administration for widespread fraud.

Roxas.

Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay immediately confronted officers on the ground and demanded that they pull back as their presence was only agitating the protesters.

By 8 p.m. KNP senatorial candidate Juan Ponce Enrile, Boots Anson Roa and Amina Rasul had addressed the crowd.

KNP senatorial candidate Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who arrived before 9 p.m., said the presence of the military was an "overkill."

One rally organizer jokingly told reporters "Welcome to Ayala 1."

Sen. Vicente Sotto III said that at around 7 p.m., Poe wanted to go to Ayala and "be with the people" when the opposition camp learned that the crowd had swelled.

But Sotto said KNP leaders discouraged Poe from doing so because his presence there might be misconstrued as instigating a people power rally.

Sotto said there will be other victory rallies that the KNP will hold after election returns show that the KNP had won in certain areas.

The rally was still going on as of 10 p.m.

Sotto said the KNP did not want the march to be "misconstrued as a people power rally because we are winning, contrary to the trending of the SWS." He was referring to the Social Weather Stations, which conducted an exit poll with the ABS-CBN network.

He also said the victory march was held in Makati because all KNP candidates, "from president down to the councilors," won in the city.

Earlier in the day, the KNP said there was no way for Poe to lose the presidential race.

"We denounce the trending process of Malacañang to prepare the minds of the public *na kunyari panalo si* GMA (that President Macapagal-Arroyo has won)," KNP spokesperson Mike Romero said at a news briefing.

Romero said Malacañang was taking such a move so "they can justify the cheating that they are doing now."

Asked if, by claiming victory, the KNP was no longer waiting for the results of the Commission on Elections count, Romero said: "We just want to let the people know that FPJ is leading, and they shouldn't be swayed by Malacañang's trending program."

Troop deployment

Anti-riot troops were deployed to the Edsa Shrine early last night in anticipation of the KNP victory march.

But Lt. Gen. Alberto Braganza, chief of the Armed Forces' National Region Command, told reporters that the deployment was "for monitoring purposes only."

But NCR Command spokesperson Maj. Erwin Rommel Lamzon told the INQUIRER that they had coordinated with the Philippine National Police to secure the Makati area during the victory rally.

"In case the [Southern Police District] will find it difficult to control the crowd, we will be there to support our anti-riot troops," he said.

4-percent lead

According to the completed results of a nationwide exit poll released yesterday by the Proberz Inc. research and consultancy firm, Poe is retaining a precarious 4-percent lead over Ms Macapagal.

Proberz executive director Alfredo Sureta said in a press conference at the National Press Club in Manila that 38 percent of 4,010 respondents interviewed on Monday morning voted for Poe; 34 percent for Ms Macapagal; 13 percent for Sen. Panfilo Lacson; 10 percent for Raul Roco; and 5 percent for Eddie Villanueva.

The Proberz exit poll was commissioned by the Christian Nationalist Union, a Catholic multisectoral lay organization allied with the Coalition for Honest, Orderly and Peaceful Elections (HOPE).

It had a margin of error of 1.6 percent and was conducted by 110 Proberz interviewers on Monday from 8 a.m. to 12 noon when, Sureta, said, citing historical data, 75 percent of voters were expected to have cast their ballots.

Taking into account the margin of error and the Comelec projection that 80-85 percent of the country's 43.46 million voters were able to cast their ballots on Monday, Poe's lead over Ms Macapagal would be a little over 1.25 million.

'Para sa bayan'

Poe told reporters that the Macapagal administration's alleged continuing use of government resources and intimidation tactics to ensure her victory meant nothing because he had made the decision to run for president in the national interest.

"Sa gobyernong ito, huwag nilang daanin sa pananalapi at pananakot sa bayan dahil itong ginagawa natin ay para sa bayan," he said.

He dismissed government claims of a high voter turnout, saying many voters were disenfranchised.

Poe urged his followers to maintain their vigilance during the counting and canvassing of votes.

He called on media outfits to be fair and nonpartisan in reporting the results of the elections: *"Hinihingi namin sa media, maging patas lang at ilabas ang katotohanan. Sa media, para sa bayan natin, once and for all, ilaban n'yo po ang katotohanan."*

Poe supporters accused the Macapagal administration of trying to rig the vote count and cited a litany of alleged abuses, including rampant vote-buying and deliberate power blackouts aimed at sowing confusion in the counting.

"The widespread irregularities could throw into doubt the validity of the election results in many parts of the country," said a KNP statement.

The KNP estimates that up to three million voters may have been prevented from casting their ballots.

It said this was the result of, among others, the government's alleged manipulation of voters' lists, like expunging certain names and juggling the designation of voters in polling precincts.

8 of 16 regions

In the Proberz exit poll, Poe won in eight of the 16 regions nationwide, and Ms Macapagal, seven regions. They both lost in the Bicol region, Roco's bailiwick.

Poe won in four of six regions in Luzon (the NCR, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon and Southern Luzon) and Ms Macapagal, in the Central and Western Visayas.

They each won in three regions in Mindanao—Poe in Regions 9 and 12 and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, where he obtained 55, 38, and 53 percent compared to Ms Macapagal's 27, 19 and 18 percent; and Ms Macapagal in Regions 10 and 11 and the Caraga Region, where she got 39, 36 and 56 percent compared to Poe's 29, 28 and 27 percent.

Proberz projected Poe to win in the so-called "Lingayen to Lucena Corridor," or the Middle Luzon area comprising vote-rich areas such as Metro Manila, Pangasinan province and Southern Tagalog.

But it said Ms Macapagal would most probably win in Central Visayas, which includes the vote-rich Cebu province, where she got 60 percent of the vote compared to Poe's 20 percent.

However, in the Ilocos and Eastern Visayas regions where Poe was leading in the survey, he won over Ms Macapagal by a mere 1 and 3 percent, respectively. He was a poor third in the Cordillera and Bicol regions.

Methodology

Sureta said multi-stage area probability sampling was used, wherein all regional areas were sampled and most of the big provinces in each region were included.

Small provinces where the tally would not matter much were deliberately excluded to meet the timeline for the final report, he said.

Most of the respondents were interviewed as they left the voting centers, and the rest, in their homes.

Sureta said the interviewers were stationed in cities or municipal capitals where precincts with the biggest number of voters were supposed to be concentrated.

The results were tabulated on the spot and transmitted by phone, e-mail, fax and text messaging to Proberz's central tabulating center in Quezon City.

At the press conference, the exchange between reporters and Sureta and two senior researchers who presented the results produced the following information:

- The interviews were mostly conducted in cities and capital towns of provinces. Proberz had assumed that the voting population of the cities or the capital of a province was greater than that of all the rest of the towns of the same province put together.
- The interviewers randomly selected the respondents but deliberately did not survey those who said they did not vote for any presidential candidate. But some of those interviewed who did not vote for vice president were included.
- There was no instruction to the interviewers on what specific time they should conduct the exit poll. Sureta said that while the survey was supposed to begin at 8 a.m., most of the interviewers actually did so at 11 a.m.

VP candidates

Proberz said that among the vice presidential candidates, Legarda had 51 percent; Sen. Noli de Castro, 46 percent; Herminio Aquino, 2 percent; and Rodolfo Pajo, one percent.

In the senatorial race, the so-called "Magic 12" were Mar Roxas, Bong Revilla, Juan Ponce Enrile, Alfredo Lim, Jinggoy Estrada, Gov. Lito Lapid, Sen. John Osmeña, Sen. Robert Barbers, Pia Cayetano, Jamby Madrigal, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon and Ernesto Maceda.

Trailing in 13th to 16th places were Richard Gordon, Boots Anson-Roa, Sen. Robert Jaworski and Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

'Desaparecido'

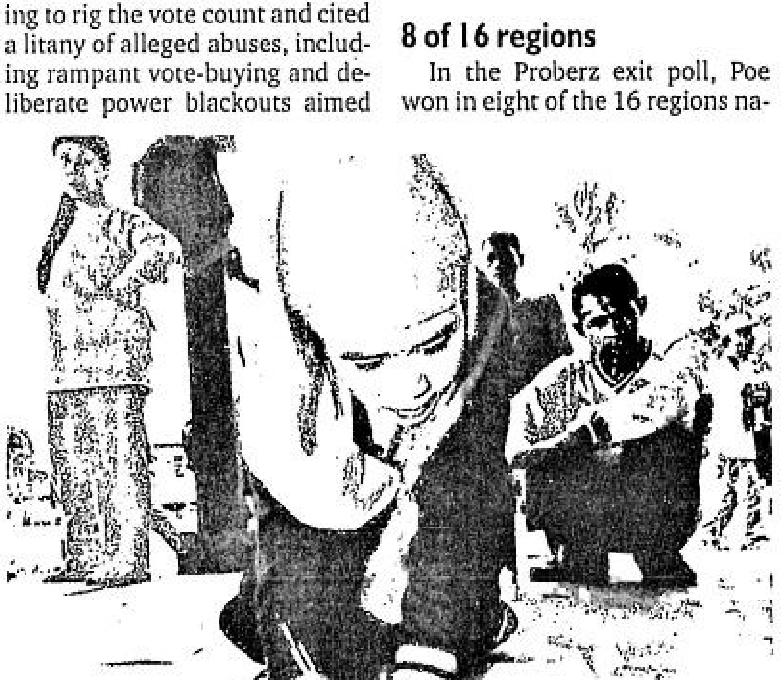
KNP senatorial candidate Amina Rasul said she was among the thousands of disenfranchised voters because her name disappeared from the voters' list in the Bagong Lipunan district of Cubao in Quezon City.

"I'm a *desaparecido,"* Rasul said in an interview at the Makati Coliseum, site of the KNP's own quick count of votes. (*"Desaparecido"* is the term used for political dissenters who have been abducted by state agents and have not been seen since.)

"I couldn't believe it. I'm a senatorial candidate," Rasul said, adding that she had been voting in the district since 1998. But she said her son Ibrahim was able to vote there.

Rasul said her name also disappeared from the quick count by GMA-7 and AMA Computer School.

She said her lawyers made representations with the TV network and the situation was rectified late Monday night. But she said GMA-7 offered neither explanation nor apology. ***With a report from Alcuin Papa***



FOREIGN observers would be floored at the sight of election officials on all fours tallying up votes in Lamitan, Basilan. AFP

Macapagal basks in 'glory,' talks of convening Con-Con

From page A1

charismatic group El Shaddai that its "servant leader" Bro. Mike Velarde and she had agreed that a constitutional convention must be convened "immediately after the May election."

"Now with a whole new term, a constitutional convention is more viable," she said.

Wearing an aqua blue business suit accented by pearl earrings and a necklace, a smiling President read a statement congratulating "the entire nation over generally peaceful, orderly and clean elections. Together, we have proven to the world that our freedom rings in all corners of the republic and the world. Everyone must be vigilant until the last vote is counted and the last canvass is done."

'Political risks'

She then called on local leaders to respect the decision of their constituents. "Everyone must now conduct themselves with prudence, sobriety and respect for the democratic process. This is a moment of national glory that we must cherish and preserve," she said.

Analysts said either a narrow victory or a landslide would present political risks, with a huge win not seen as credible.

"If the margin of victory for the President is two percent, then you have the chance the opposition will use that as an excuse to raise holy hell," said Scott Harrison, managing director of Manila-based risk consultancy Pacific Strategies & Assessments.

Poe claimed in a press conference yesterday there was widespread fraud, citing the disenfranchisement of a large chunk of voters because of hitches in the voter's list. *(Story on Page A1)*

But presidential campaign spokesperson Michael Defensor, who said Ms Macapagal would end up with a lead of 1 million over Poe, said the opposition should show proof that the administration rigged the election results.

While it might be true that a number of voters were not able to vote, he said Ms Macapagal's supporters were also affected by these unforeseen hitches. Defensor also noted that most of the complaints of cheating were mainly concentrated on warring candidates for local posts.

Call for vigilance

Asked about how the government would dispel the tension as the votes were still being counted, Ms Macapagal said security measures have worked "quite well" and would stay in place.

"As for information, this is a Commission on Elections show, so all information must come from the Comelec. In fact, it is supervising the soldiers, the police, the teachers. The national government is outside of that," she said.

Ms Macapagal also said the vigilance of law enforcers paid off because no terroristic act marred the election. "For the terrorists to succeed, they only have to succeed once. But for us to be successful, we have to be successful in keeping terrorists away all the time."

Asked to comment on the initial unofficial results showing her leading over Poe, Ms Macapagal said: "The most important thing now is to leave behind the rancor that unfortunately characterized the campaign. I tried my best and I think I succeeded to keep my own campaign on the level of issues and platform. But sad to say, it wasn't like that all around. We should also continue to be vigilant for peaceful and credible elections."

'Something important'

During lunch, the President continued to receive reports on election results in the country and abroad. She hardly touched her food.

But she hinted that she discussed something important with her rival and accuser Sen. Panfilo Lacson during the "Unity Mass" held at San Agustin Church on the eve of the elections.

"I would not say there are initial talks (with Lacson) but I expressed that," she said.

Lacson had been the President's biggest thorn during her past three years in office, after he accused her and her husband Jose Miguel Arroyo of stashing away campaign contributions in secret accounts.

Ms Macapagal was originally scheduled to resume her water distribution project yesterday in Parañaque, but the event was canceled. "I decided to give myself a day-off," she said.

Senior deputy presidential chief of staff Rene Velasco admitted the mood in the Palace was upbeat "because the elections were clean and the exit polls and early results show that the people gave her a vote of confidence."

Real mandate

Victory would give Ms Macapagal her first real mandate to lead the country after three years of only partly successful efforts to tackle corruption, insurgencies, huge debts, pervasive poverty and a weak economy.

The official results will take a month, leaving the country and foreign investors in limbo and the government hamstrung with the potential for instability during the drawn-out count.

Interviews with nearly 21,000 people by independent radio network dzRH showed the President with 36.5 percent of the vote and Poe with 31.4 percent. A preliminary exit poll by state-run television showed Ms Macapagal with a 5-to-10 percentage point margin over Poe.

The media estimates were roughly in line with the last pre-election surveys by Social Weather Stations and Pulse Asia, the nation's two main pollsters.

"I'd be surprised if we see something very different because, in past elections, these surveys have been reasonably accurate," said Philippine Equity Partners managing director Jojo Gonzales.

Overall victory

Administration congressmen yesterday said the President's lead in Metro Manila and the Visayas would contribute largely to her overall victory since these are the vote-rich areas with 12 million voters.

Lakas-CMD Representatives Monico Puentevella of Bacolod City and Alan Peter Cayetano of Taguig-Pateros said the latest quick counts and exit polls had shown the President leading in these areas.

Representatives Prospero Nograles of Davao City, Augusto Syjuco of Iloilo, Isidoro Real of Zambonga del Sur, Prospero Pichay of Surigao del Sur and Robert "Ace" Barbers of Surigao del Norte, for their part, expressed confidence that the poll counts would sustain the lead shown in pre-election surveys of Ms Macapagal and her running mate Sen. Noli de Castro. ***With a report from Reuters***

Noli, Loren both claim poll victory

From page A1

over De Castro whom she consistently trailed in surveys during the entire campaign period.

Thanks, guys

"There is no room for any more doubt," Legarda said as she thanked the "millions" who voted for her.

She also expressed her "heartfelt gratitude" to the national and local candidates of the KNP, particularly standard-bearer Fernando Poe Jr.

She said that her party mates all "truly believe that I can make a big difference in the life of our nation. I shall not let them down."

Legarda likewise thanked public schoolteachers, police and military personnel and volunteers from election monitoring organizations for doing their part.

"Let us now join hands and unite so that, with the blessings of The Almighty, the entire nation can finally enjoy the peace and progress that have eluded us for many years," she said.

In the same statement, Legarda warned against quarters that were "bent on subverting the will of the electorate through fraudulent means." She did not say whether she was pointing a finger at the Macapagal administration.

She called for vigilance to make sure that the final results of the elections would reflect the voice of the electorate: "We must never allow the enemies of democracy to frustrate and subvert the will of the people, and in the process plunge this nation into yet another period of turmoil, uncertainty and division."

Presidential certainty

In Malacañang, President Macapagal-Arroyo said her piece on the subject in one sentence: "I think Noli will make it."

During a thanksgiving lunch that she hosted for Palace reporters who covered her three-month campaign, Ms Macapagal was certain of victory for De Castro, who tailed Legarda in initial unofficial election counts.

Ms Macapagal attributed part of her own early lead to town hall meetings that De Castro had moderated.

It was one of the trademarks of her campaign, she pointed out, avoiding loud rallies and answering people's immediate concerns in the meetings that she and De Castro called "pulong bayan." As much as it worked for her, Ms Macapagal said, it was also one of the clinchers for De Castro.

She said the town hall meeting concept had helped focus on issues, and that she hoped this would become the new practice in future elections.

"(Noli) was very instrumental in making the issues more understandable (to ordinary people)," the President said. During those town hall meetings, she added, she assured the people that De Castro would be their "bridge" to her, and that he would see to it that she would fulfill all the promises she gave them.

'By a landslide'

De Castro has not been visible of late and has refused to take phone calls, but he appeared on television briefly last night to reiterate the statement issued earlier in the day via text-messaging by his campaign manager Cesar Chavez. The statement said the broadcaster-turned-senator was not bothered by Legarda's initial lead.

"From what I know, initial results being broadcast and written in newspapers reflected mostly initial reports coming from NCR and certain parts of Calabarzon and Central Luzon where I expected not to do very well," De Castro said. "However, from Regions 5 to 12, Caraga and ARMM, the results are consistently very encouraging. I never had any doubt that the GMA-Noli team would win."

"*Panalong maliwanag kami* (We're clearly winning)," Chavez said, "maybe not in Metro Manila, but ... in Bicol and all the way down."

For instance, he noted, De Castro was leading in Cebu, Iloilo, Davao and many other major provinces, and would definitely win "by a landslide" in Bohol.

The message was all

In Concepcion, Tarlac, Alyansa's Aquino said he and presidential candidate Raul Roco had accomplished their "mission."

Their party was able to send out a message of hope, to tell the people that all was not lost, Aquino told the INQUIRER. He said the campaign had provided Alyansa with a vehicle to reach out to as many Filipinos as possible.

"It was a crusade. We wanted to make a statement, to tell the people that they had to choose the right leaders," Aquino said. He admitted that the "thought of victory" also crossed their minds. "But it was more the message that we meant to put across, and I think we have done that."

Short of officially conceding defeat, Aquino said: "The people have spoken and we have to respect that."

He said he and the other Alyansa candidates were grateful to those who voted for them, as well as those who wanted to vote for them but did not.

Change Comelec culture

An election was "a vision of hope" that consisted of many factors, Aquino explained. "The Comelec (Commission on Elections) plays a very important role (in this vision), being in the forefront of our democratic institutions."

But he said the "prevailing attitude at the Comelec ... should be changed."

The necessary change was neither "a question of putting legal personalities there" or a matter of "improving on" some things. "The whole 'culture' at the poll body needed to be reevaluated," he said. "It is a question of management."

SOMETHING'S gotta give when Senators Noli de Castro and Loren Legarda both claim they have clinched the No.2 post in the land.

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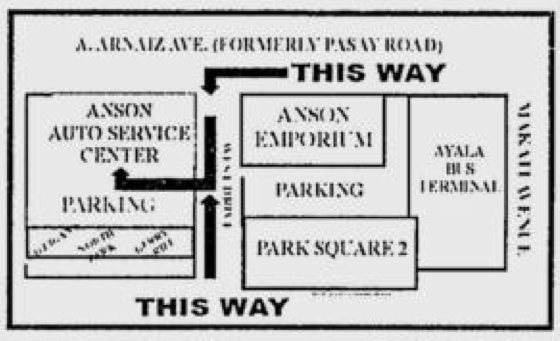

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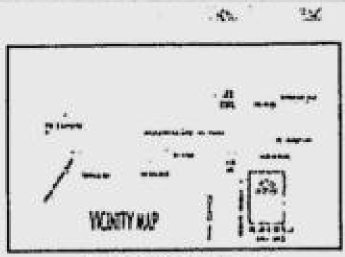


Location Map

ICRC was told abuse 'part of process'

LONDON—The Red Cross saw US troops keeping Iraqi prisoners naked for days in darkness at the Abu Ghraib jail last October and was told by an intelligence officer in charge it was "part of the process," a report leaked on Monday said.

In the 24-page report, the Red Cross also said coalition military intelligence officers estimated up to 90 percent of those detained in Iraq were arrested by mistake.

The report added to the pressure on US officials by revealing that commanders were alerted to apparent abuses at Abu Ghraib months before they opened a criminal investigation.

The Red Cross, which has special access to war zone prisons under international treaties, said mistreatment of prisoners "went beyond exceptional cases and might be considered as a practice tolerated by the CF (Coalition Forces)."

Abuse was "in some cases tantamount to torture."

Although most of the Red Cross' observations concerned US forces, it also piled pressure on Washington's closest ally, describing British troops forcing Iraqi detainees to kneel and stomping on their necks in an incident in which one died.

The International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva confirmed that the confidential Feb. 4 report, initially leaked on the Website of the Wall Street Journal, was genuine.

During a visit to Abu Ghraib in October, Red Cross delegates witnessed "the practice of keeping persons deprived of their liberty completely naked in totally empty concrete cells and in total darkness," the report said.

"Upon witnessing such cases, the ICRC interrupted its visits and requested an explanation from the authorities. The military intelligence officer in charge of the interrogation explained that this practice was 'part of the process'." Delegates met prisoners who were being held naked in complete darkness. Others were forced to wear women's underwear.

The Red Cross' visit took place two months before pictures were taken of US troops abusing prisoners, which later led to criminal charges against seven soldiers. US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has said he was unaware of abuse until the investigation into the pictures was launched in January.

Those pictures appeared in the media last month, causing international outrage and prompting apologies by US President George W. Bush and other senior officials. However, Washington has said it believed the practices were isolated incidents of aberrant behavior by individuals and not usual practice.

Although much of the abuse described in the report appears to have taken place in jails run by US forces, the report also describes the death of an Iraqi prisoner in custody in the British zone of Basra last September.

The victim's name is blacked out, but Britain's defense ministry said it referred to detainee Baha Musa, whose death Britain says it has been investigating since last year. *Reuters*

Amnesty: UK troops killed unarmed Iraqis

LONDON—Amnesty International accused British soldiers in Iraq on Tuesday of killing civilians, including an 8-year-old girl and a wedding guest, when they posed no apparent threat.

The human rights group said Britain was undermining the rule of law in Iraq by failing to investigate properly the suspected unlawful killings.

In a report released amid a storm of allegations about the mistreatment of Iraqi prisoners by American and British forces, Amnesty said the British troops' actions had breached international human rights standards.

"The British Army's response to suspected unlawful killing of civilians has undermined, rather than upheld, the rule of law," it said.

"It has failed to conduct investigations into all killings of civilians, and the investigations that have been carried out have failed to ensure that justice was done and seen to be done in the eyes of the victims' families."

Amnesty said that in total, UK troops had been involved in the killings of at least 37 civilians since May 1, 2003, when the war to topple Saddam Hussein officially ended.

It highlighted nine cases in the southern Iraqi areas of Basra and Amara, including that of 8-year-old Hanan Saleh Matrud, shot dead on Aug. 21, 2003 near her village.

An eyewitness told Amnesty Hanan was killed when a soldier aimed at her and fired a shot from around 60 metres away, but the army said she was killed accidentally by a warning shot.

Amnesty also reported the death of Ghanem Kadhem Kati, who was shot outside his home while celebrating a family wedding.

It said investigations into the killings, if conducted at all, were shrouded in secrecy and victims' families had not been given adequate information about how to apply for compensation.

A defense ministry spokesperson said the government was studying the report. "We are aware of the concerns expressed by Amnesty International and are considering the points raised. We will respond in detail in due course," he said.

Amnesty also reported on the killings of several civilians during demonstrations, and killings of supporters of Saddam's government carried out by armed vigilante groups. *Reuters*

Rebels blast pipeline, slash Iraq oil exports

KARBALA, Iraq—Insurgents blasted an oil pipeline, setting off a huge blaze and slashing Iraq's daily oil exports by about 25 percent. US troops traded gunfire Monday with fighters loyal to radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in this Shiite city south of Baghdad.

US tanks and helicopters destroyed al-Sadr's headquarters in the Baghdad neighborhood of Sadr City in weekend clashes. US officials said 35 Iraqis were killed before fighting ended just before dawn Monday in the Shiite neighborhood.

Later Monday, a large but distant explosion was heard in central Baghdad, and Al Jazeera television reported renewed clashes in Sadr City. The US command had no comment.

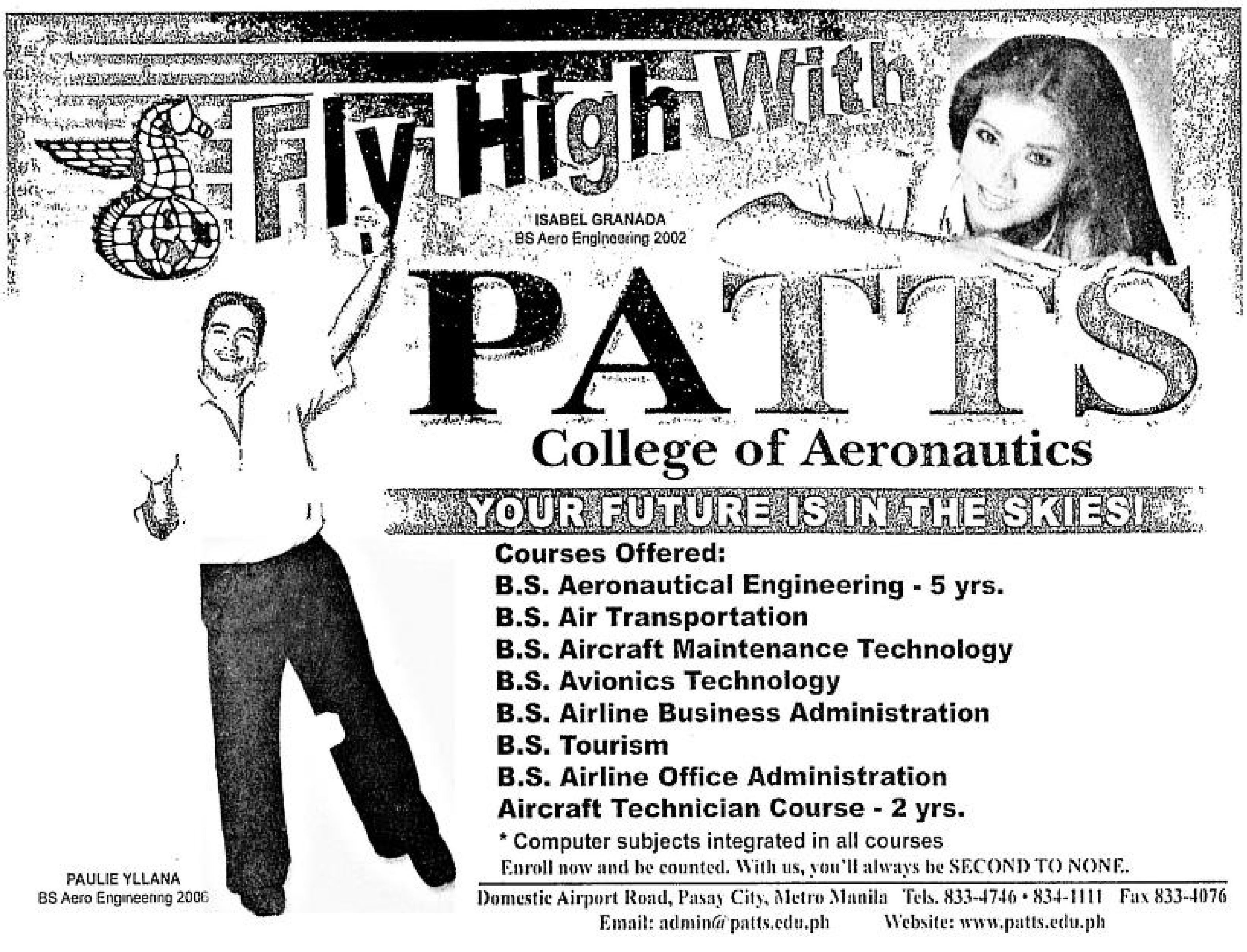
In a statement broadcast by Lebanon's Al Manar television, the "political forces of Sadr City" appealed to US authorities to stop attacks on the district and to "peacefully solve this conflict without violence, terrorism and extreme cruelty."

An aide to al-Sadr vowed Monday to step up the campaign against the US-led occupation.

"The second phase of the fight has not been born yet," the aide, Hossam al-Husseini, said in Najaf. "This is a struggle for independence. It will end when the Americans leave Iraq."

Elsewhere, US Marines entered the restive city of Fallujah on Monday for the first time since the bloody, three-week siege ended last month. The Marines, accompanied by Iraqi forces, remained in the city for about an hour and left without incident.

US officials hailed the move Fallujah as a sign that Fallujah was quiet after the Americans abandoned the siege and turned rebellious city over to former soldiers from Saddam Hussein's army. *AP*



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New Chechnya violence feared after leader's slay

CHECHEN men wearing ethnic hats attend a funeral feast during the traditional burial ceremony for their slain leader, President Akhmad Kadyrov, killed in the Tsentoroi settlement that is home to Kadyrov's clan, southeastern Chechnya, May 10. AP

GROZNY, Russia—Wearied by 10 years of armed conflict, Chechnya braced itself Tuesday for new violence that many say will follow the weekend assassination of its Kremlin-backed president.

The first attacks came overnight Monday when two Russians were killed and five injured when Chechens used grenade launchers to attack a temporary federal base in the southeastern district of Shali, scene of frequent fighting.

While authorities insisted that the situation in the republic would not destabilize, many ordinary Chechens said a new round of fighting is all but assured in a region where conflict has raged ever since it first pushed for independence from Russia in the early 1990s.

The mood follows a bomb attack in central Grozny Sunday that killed Chechnya's controversial president Akhmad Kadyrov, a onetime rebel who switched allegiance to Moscow when the current Russo-Chechen war broke out in October 1999.

"Nothing good will come of this," said Wahid, a driver in the capital, echoing the general sentiment. "Nothing."

While several law enforcement officials attending Kadyrov's funeral on Monday insisted that the situation "was under control," Vyacheslav Tikhomirov, a top Russian military commander in Chechnya, acknowledged that the conflict could escalate.

"Those who'll try to destabilize the situation, let them beware... We are ready to bring in new reserves if necessary," he said. "We will fight to the end" even if it takes "five, 10, 20 years."

Kadyrov was elected Chechnya's president last October in a Kremlin-orchestrated campaign that Moscow hailed as the beginning of a political solution to the Chechen war.

But Kadyrov was despised by many here, partly because the thousands-strong security force he established was blamed for the numerous killings and kidnappings that continue to plague the Caucasus republic.

Although the force was headed by his 28-year-old son Ramzan, with Kadyrov gone, no one is certain of where the loyalties of these men—many of them former rebels who've been granted amnesty—will lie.

Meanwhile separatists in Chechnya—who say they have from 5,000 to 8,000 men at their disposal—have vowed to keep fighting until Russian troops leave.

"The only thing that will change the situation is if they leave and peacekeeping troops come in," Muslim, who runs support for the rebels in southwestern Chechnya, said last week. *Reuters*

Tanong ng Bayan
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Ngayong Alas-10 Ng Gabi

Exit poll, exit poll, paano ka ginawa?

Lumabas na ang exit poll ng Social Weather Stations. Dapat ba tayong maniwala? Paano ba ginagawa ang exit poll? Ang sagot nina Inquirer columnist Winnie Monsod, opposition senatorial candidate Ernesto Maceda, at Mercy Abad, presidente ng field research group na kinokontrata ng SWS. Ngayong alas-10 ng gabi, sa isa na namang election special ng InqTV, sa ABC.

ABC

Japan opposition leader quits

TOKYO—The leader of Japan's biggest opposition party resigned on Monday as his wounded party struggled to repair its image before a parliamentary election just two months away.

Calls for Democratic Party chief Naoto Kan to step down from the top post had mounted since he said late last month that he—like seven members of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's Cabinet—had skipped payments into the state pension scheme.

"My failure to pay into the pension system increased mistrust and created huge headaches for the public and for members of our party, and for that my responsibility is huge," Kan told a meeting of Democratic Party members of parliament.

"So, in front of all of you, I want to take responsibility and resign as party leader," said Kan, a once-popular grassroots activist whose image has long suffered by comparison with the more telegenic, politically adept Koizumi.

Reform of the pension system, straining under the burden of Japan's rapidly aging population, has been a hot topic of debate before elections for parliament's Upper House in July.

Pressure on Kan to resign mounted after top government spokesperson Yasuo Fukuda, one of the most powerful members of Koizumi's Cabinet, quit on Friday after making a similar confession. The Democratic leader said he mistakenly skipped payments for 10 months while health minister in 1996.

More members of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) said on Monday they too had missed pension payments, but Koizumi denied rumors that he might have done the same before becoming a lawmaker in 1972, Kyodo news agency said.

Analysts say it's almost impossible for the LDP and its coalition partner to lose their Upper House majority in the Juiy election.

But a poor showing for the LDP itself would weaken Koizumi's clout in his fourth—and probably final—year in office. *Reuters*

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No such thing as 'herbal' Viagra, researchers find

WASHINGTON—"Herbal" Viagra and other so-called natural alternatives for treating impotence advertised on the Internet and in men's magazines are often contaminated with real drugs and could kill those who take them, researchers said on Monday.

They said the flood of e-mail spam touting alternatives to prescription erectile dysfunction drugs was a sign of how popular such products were, but the researchers suggested that governments monitor and regulate supplements more closely.

"These are being marketed as being safe and natural products," said Dr. Neil Fleshner of Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto, Canada. "It is plausible that deaths have occurred or could occur."

Fleshner and colleagues bought seven "herbal" erectile dysfunction products to find out what was in them.

Two contained significant levels of prescription phosphodiesterase inhibitors—sildenafil, sold by Pfizer under the brand name Viagra and tadalafil, Eli Lilly and Co's Cialis.

"We think the implications of this are quite dramatic," Fleshner told a news conference.

"Since these compounds are not natural, deliberate contamination of these products must be considered," added Fleshner, whose team presented the findings to a meeting of the American Urological Association in San Francisco.

The erectile dysfunction drugs affect blood flow and can be deadly when taken with certain heart drugs containing nitrates.

The researchers said they would continue efforts to get the US Food and Drug Administration to more closely regulate "alternative" products.

Current law allows non-prescription supplements to be advertised so long as they do not make specific health claims, such as lowering cholesterol. However, the FDA does move to stop the marketing of products that contain prescription medicines.

"The law, in my opinion, is way off the mark," Dr. Ira Sharlip of Pacific Urology in San Francisco told the news conference.

A British study said other herbal products could also be dangerous.

Dr. Ramesh Thurairaja and colleagues at the Bristol Royal Infirmary in Britain did a "Google" Internet search using the words "herbal" and "Viagra."

"I actually picked up 160,000 hits last year," Thurairaja told a news conference. "Two weeks ago I typed the same two words in and got 690,000 hits." *Reuters*

WORLDBRIEFS

Israel troops killed in Gaza blast

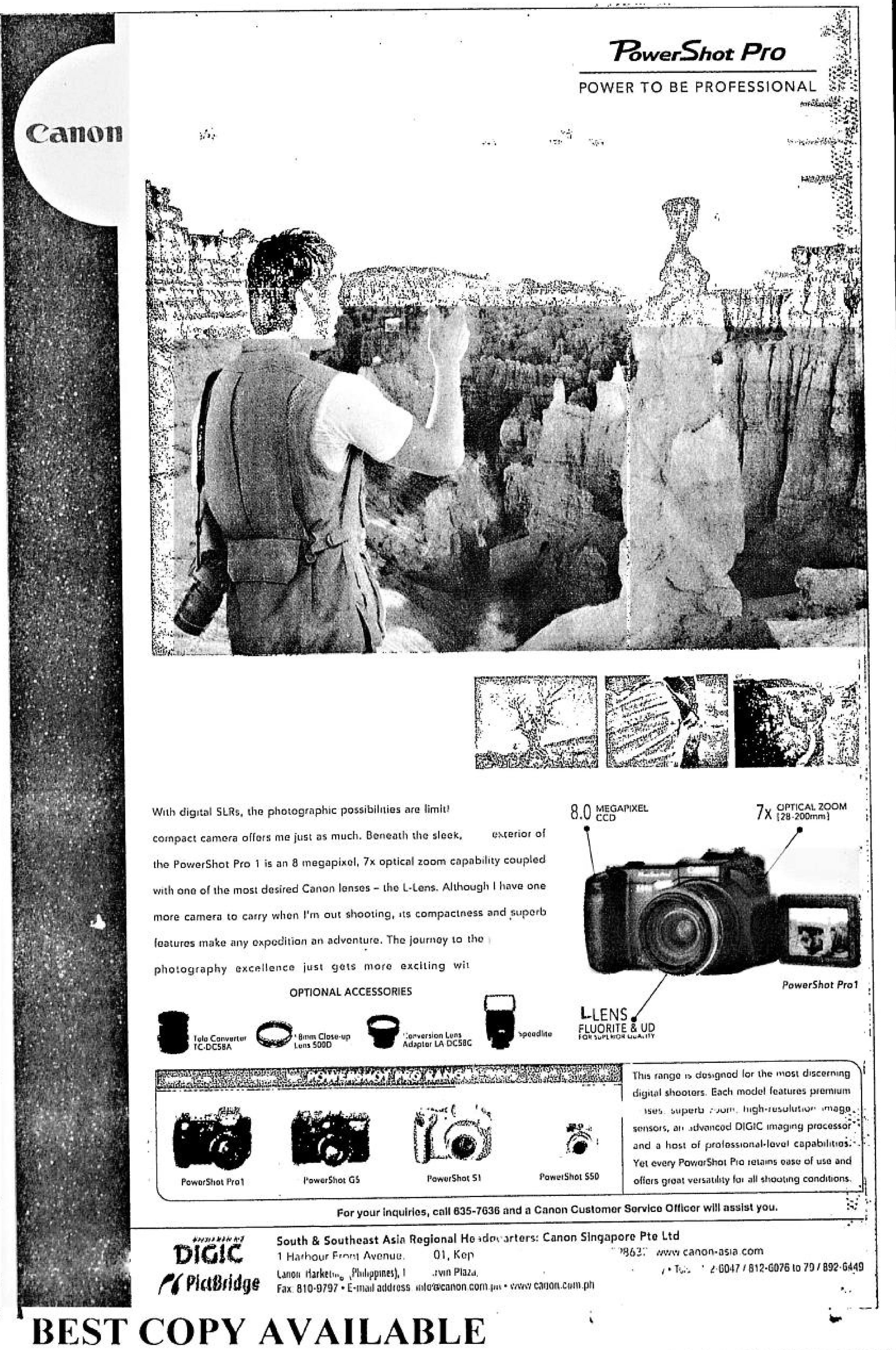
GAZA—An explosion ripped through an Israeli military vehicle in the Gaza Strip on Tuesday, killing several soldiers during a raid in which troops shot dead three Palestinians, witnesses said. Six soldiers were killed in the blast, Dubai-based Al Arabiya television said, in escalating violence in the coastal territory since Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's right-wing Likud party voted against his Gaza pullout plan on May 2. *Reuters*

Access to Saddam denied, says lawyer

AMMAN—Saddam Hussein's defense lawyers said on Monday they had received no response from the US administration in Iraq and the International Committee of the Red Cross to repeated requests to see their client. Lawyers representing the ousted leader also said they were ready to represent Iraqi prisoners abused by US and British soldiers, whose pictures angered people around the world. "We are willing to take legal action against the US administration and the Red Cross if they don't allow us to see President Saddam," said Jordanian lawyer Mohammad Rashdan, one of a 20-strong legal team appointed by Saddam's wife to represent him. *Reuters*

India polls head for hung parliament

NEW DELHI—India's main political parties stepped up backroom negotiations to attract coalition partners on Tuesday after post-election exit polls pointed to a hung parliament with everything to play for. Exit polls released after the marathon election suggested a real possibility Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee might not return to power, a dramatic turnaround for a man brimming with confidence when he called the election six months early. Vajpayee had banked on a strong economy, a good monsoon and improving ties with Pakistan sweeping him back to office. But his campaign motto of "India shining" failed to resonate with many rural and urban poor who feel excluded from the economic boom. Waiting in the wings is the opposition Congress party led by Sonia Gandhi, the Italian-born widow of assassinated former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who is now scrambling to put together a coalition of her own, something unthinkable six months ago *Reuters*



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New Chechnya violence feared after leader's slay

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Reuters

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More members of t[illegible] Party (LDP) said on M[illegible] pension payments. [illegible] that he might have d[illegible] ing a lawmaker in 19[illegible]

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Reuters

No such thing as 'herbal' Viagra, researchers find

WASHINGTON—"Herbal" Viagra and other so-called natural alternatives for treating impotence advertised on the Internet and in men's magazines are often contaminated with real drugs and could kill those who take them researchers said on Monday.

They said the flood of e-mail spam touting alternatives to prescription erectile dysfunction drugs was a sign of how popular such products were, but the researchers suggested that governments monitor and regulate supplements more closely.

"These are being marketed a being safe and natural products said Dr. Neil Fleshner of Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto, Canada. "It is plausible that deaths have occurred or could occur."

Fleshner and colleagues bought seve[illegible] "herbal" erectile dysfunction products to find [illegible] what was in them.

Two contained significant levels of prescription phosphodiesterase inhibitors [illegible]ildenafil, sold by Pfizer under the brand name Viagra and tadalafil, Eli Lilly and Co's Cialis.

"We think the implications of this are quite dramatic," Fleshner told a news conference.

"Since these compounds are not natural, deliberate contamination of these products must be considered," added Fleshner, whose team presented the findings to [illegible] m[illegible] of the American Urologic[illegible] ation in San Franci[illegible]

The erectile dysfun[illegible] affect blood flow [illegible] deadly when taken [illegible] heart drugs conta[illegible]

The researchers [illegible] would continue effort [illegible] US Food and Drug Ad[illegible] to more closely reg[illegible]late "alternative" product[illegible]

Current law allow[illegible] scription supplements [illegible] tised so long as [illegible] specific health [illegible] lowering cholesterol [illegible] Ho[illegible] the FDA does mov[illegible] marketing of produc[illegible] tain prescription me[illegible]

"The law, in my [illegible] off the mar[illegible] Pacific Urolo[illegible] told the news confe[illegible]

A Britis[illegible] herbal prod[illegible] dangerous [illegible]

Dr. Ramesh Th[illegible] leagues at the Bri[illegible] Ro[illegible] In[illegible] many in Brita[illegible] ternet search [illegible] "herbal and [illegible]

"I actually [illegible] hits last year [illegible] news confer[illegible] "Tw[illegible] ago I typed th[illegible] in and got 690,[illegible]00 h[illegible]

Reuters

WORLDBRIEFS

Israeli [illegible]ops [illegible]lled in G[illegible]

GAZA—An expl[illegible] ripped through a[illegible] Israeli militar[illegible] Strip on Tuesday, killing several soldiers during a raid in which troop[illegible] dead three Palestinian[illegible] witnesses said. Six soldiers were killed in the bla[illegible] Dubai-based Al Arabiya television said in escalating violence in the [illegible] territory since Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharo[illegible] right-wing [illegible] voted again[illegible] the Gaza pullout plan on Ma[illegible]

Reuters

Acc[illegible] dd[illegible] deni[illegible]d

AMMAN[illegible] defe[illegible] said on M[illegible] ceived [illegible] from [illegible] administration in Iraq and t[illegible] Committee of the Red Cro[illegible] to repeated requests to see th[illegible] Lawyers representing the [illegible]ted leader also said they were ready [illegible] sent Iraqi prisoners abused by US and British soldiers, whose pictu[illegible] gered people around the world. "We are willing to take legal action [illegible] the US administration and the Red Cross if they don't allow us to [illegible] dent Saddam," said Jordanian lawyer Mohammad Rashdan [illegible] strong legal team appointed by Saddam's wife to represent [illegible]

Reuters

India polls head for hung parli[illegible]

NEW DELHI[illegible] stepped up [illegible] tions to attra[illegible] partners on Tuesday after post-electio[illegible] pointed to a hung parliament with everything to play for. [illegible] after the marath[illegible] election suggested a real possibility Prime Minister A[illegible] Behari Vajpayee might not return to power, a dramatic turnaround f[illegible] brimming with confidence when he called the election [illegible] months [illegible] payee had banked [illegible] strong e[illegible] good mon[illegible] and im[illegible] ties with Pakistan [illegible] eping him back to office. But [illegible] campaig[illegible] "India [illegible] ate with many rural and urban po[illegible] Waiting in the [illegible] Congre[illegible] party [illegible] by [illegible] former Prime Minister [illegible]

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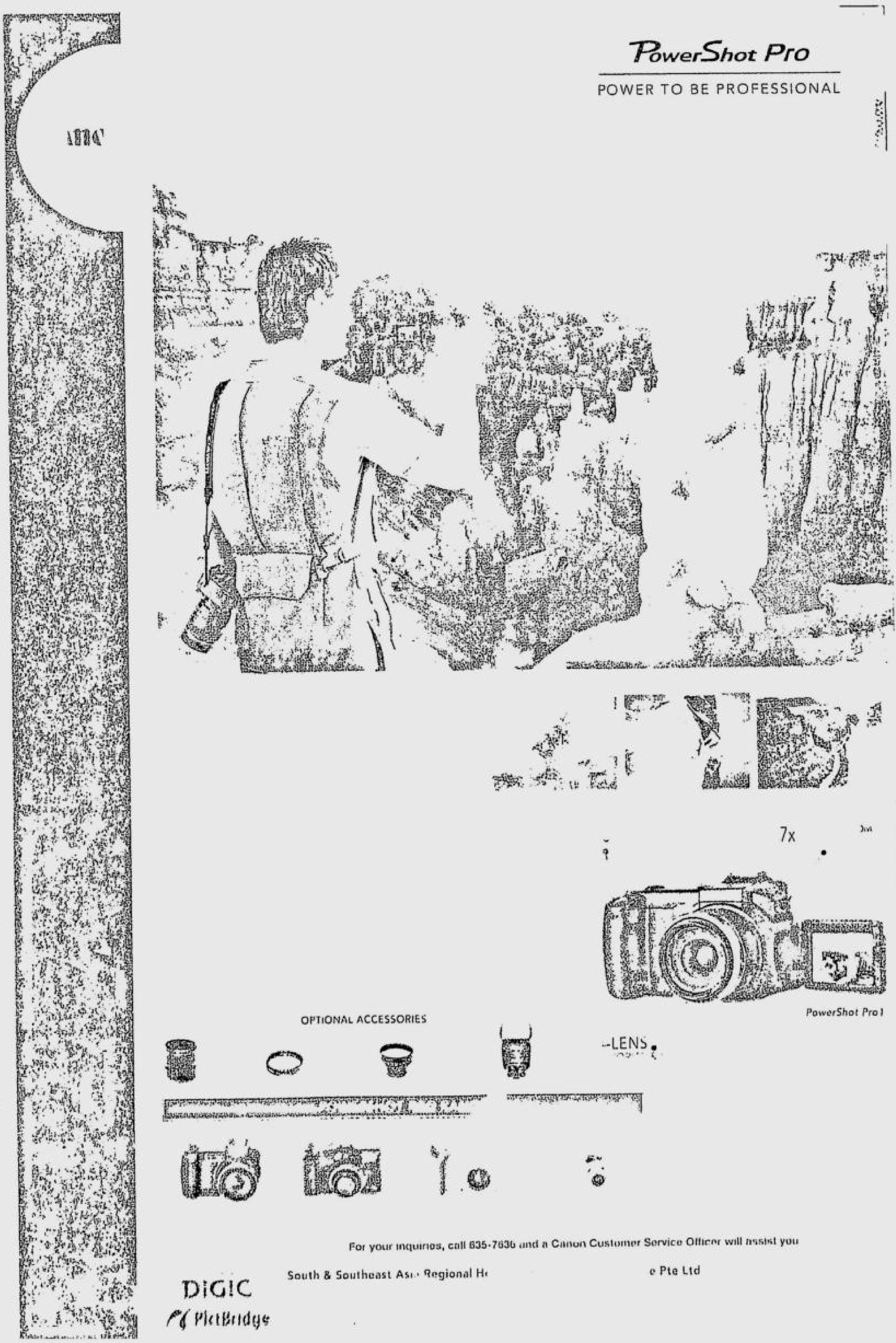
Exit poll, exit poll, paano ka ginawa?

Lumabas na ang exit poll ng Social Weather Stations. Dapat ba tayong maniwala? Paano ba ginagawa ang exit poll? Ang sagot nina Inquirer columnist Winnie Monsod, opposition senatorial candidate Ernesto Maceda, at Mercy Abad, presidente ng field research group na kinokontrata ng SWS. Ngayong alas-10 ng gabi, sa isa na namang election special ng InqTV, sa ABC.



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Reproach

EDITORIAL

THE CONDUCT of the national election last Monday was a testament to the enduring patience of teachers, voters, volunteers and even policemen and military men. It was, however, a resounding reproach to the Commission on Elections. It was a monument, in a sense, to arrogance and misplaced priorities.

The public and the politicians were unanimous in desiring a hassle-free election, with a swift count of the results to follow. Through a combination of bad judgment, ineptitude and shady deals, the Comelec bungled the chance to pursue effective automation, and spent hundreds of millions on half-baked schemes that only further muddled the voters' lists. The result, of course, was an insufficiency of supplies in many precincts, or lost forms and materials, and the disenfranchisement of thousands of voters.

The disenfranchisement could have reached a scale not seen since the notoriously rigged polls of 1986. Neither the Comelec nor Namfrel can say how many voters were deprived of their right to select their leaders. But the anecdotal evidence seems disturbing.

The chief complaint of those who couldn't vote was that their names had disappeared or got mangled. As a result, the identities even of people who had voted many times before were questioned or they were simply denied their right to vote. And yet there were the usual cases of the dead remaining on lists, indicating that neither the old lists were purged or the new ones properly drawn up to effectively take their place.

Further complicating matters was the lack of initiative displayed by some school teachers or Comelec officials who did not try to facilitate voting for those who had a right to do so. Some of the disenfranchised managed to eventually vote through sheer persistence; many more did not because of bureaucratic obstacles. Hardest hit were first-time voters whose initiation into the electoral process consisted of the denial of their right of suffrage.

The Comelec reacted to the complaints of disenfranchised voters by restating what they should have done. That helps no one and merely rubs salt on the wound. There was no expression of regret, or even remorse and certainly no attempt to replace speculation with hard numbers concerning the disenfranchised. The teachers, too, was given short shrift, with no explanation given as to why an already onerous task was made more difficult due to the glitches in the system of distributing election paraphernalia.

In short, there was a total failure of leadership.

We hope this will be the last election of this nature held in this country. The solutions were there long before this election, and they remain solutions even as the next election seems still far away for some people. Foremost among these is the dropping of the Comelec's adversarial attitude toward the public and the private sector. Second is the adoption of more transparent bidding procedures and holding technical consultations to ensure that any automated voting system will comply with the law. Third is raising the standards for the men and women who will be appointed to the Comelec.

The Comelec at this point is not totally discredited because the public still manages to distinguish the inferior abilities of the present leadership from the rank and file who can only do as well as their superiors guide them. Buffeted by legal and public relations storms of its own making, the Comelec has been looking rudderless. This sorry state should not be allowed to persist for long. Our democracy can ill afford it.

Game for the rich

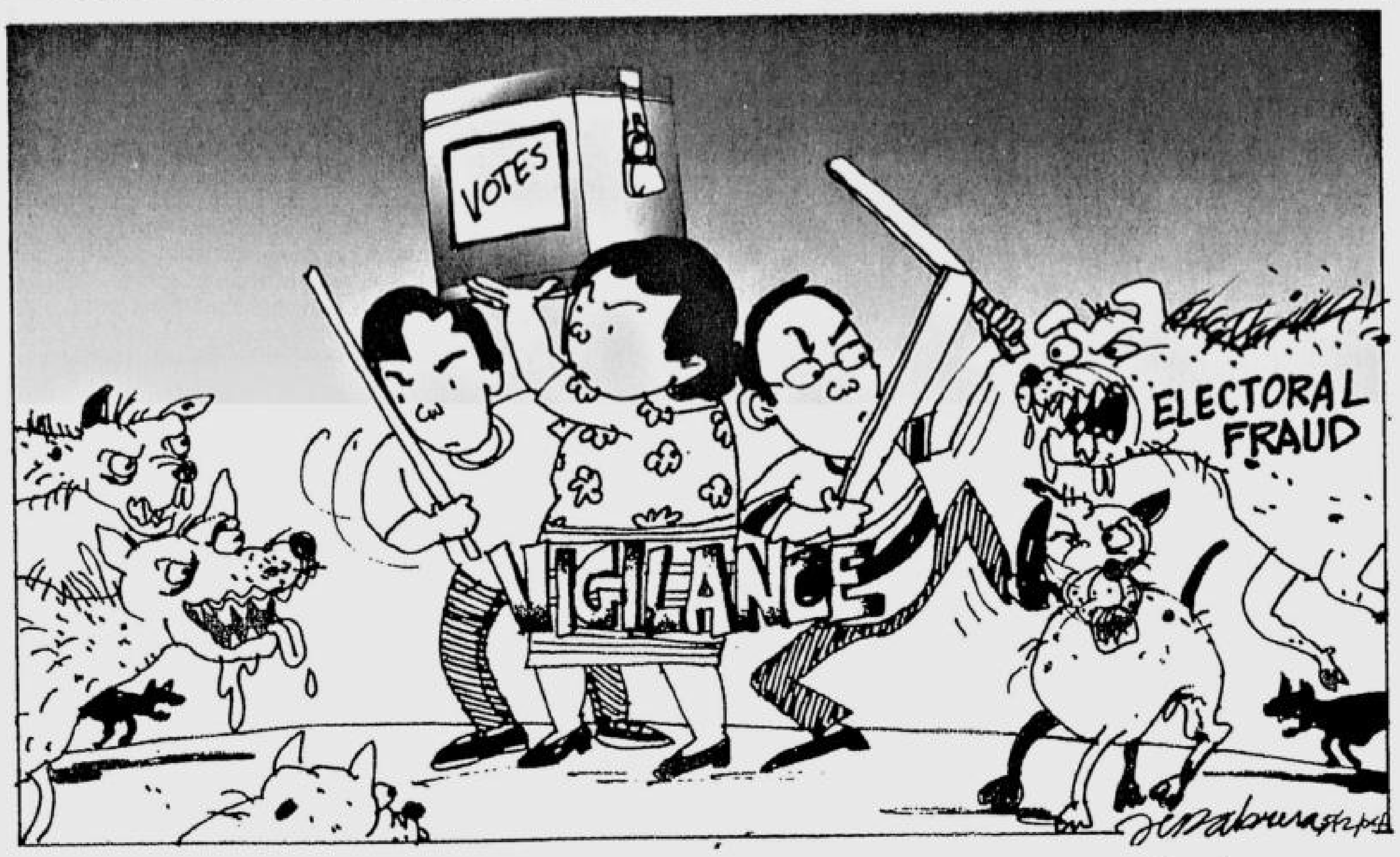
FOREIGN COMMENT

AMERICANS are crazy about records. This time it's politics: the race for the US presidency will cost more than $1 billion, a new record.

This milestone shows the parlous state of American democracy. Packaging is more important than policy for both Democrats and Republicans. It's not about a message but about damaging your opponent.

The money-sucking negativism in the campaign will increase voters' disgust with politics. For more and more Americans democracy is a playground for the rich. Hopefully this new record will bring the world's most powerful democracy, which wants so badly to be an example for others, to its senses.

Algemeen Dagblad (Rotterdam, Netherlands)



Poll can end like Pacquiao-Marquez fight

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

JUDGING by the initial election returns, the presidential fight could very well end up like the Pacquiao-Marquez fight—a draw, if that is at all possible in a presidential race.

And like the boxing bout, the real winner can be robbed of his victory by the real loser who, alas, happens to control the government, the same way Pacquiao was robbed of his victory by the promoters who control boxing in Nevada.

The voting is over but the counting has just begun. And as everyone knows, a candidate can win in the voting but still lose in the counting. Everyone, from candidate to voter, fears and expects cheating. It is not far-fetched to believe that almost every candidate and political group has a special operation or arm tasked to cheat or to foil any attempt to cheat by the enemy. A popular election joke is about cheating, purloined from the title of an action flick:

Lacson: *Akin ang Cavite.*
Roco: *Akin ang Bicol.*
Brother Eddie: *Akin ang maka-Diyos.*
FPJ: *Akin ang Mindanao.*
GMA: *Akin ang Comelec!*

That is why everyone should not relax and let his guard down. A lot of mysterious things can still happen between now and the time the Comelec proclaims the winners. Cheating in the precincts is now small-time and useful only to local candidates.

Big-time cheating now happens in the provincial certificates of canvass where the No. 3 mysteriously becomes No. 8, No. 1 becomes No. 7, 9 or 11, and the totals get either additional or lesser zeroes. Such is *dagdag-bawas*, an invention perfected by Filipino politicians.

I am almost certain that special operatives of some candidates are already dispersed in far-flung areas to cheat for them. That was what happened in previous elections, with operatives even chasing each other in airplanes from place to place. That was how certain senators won and others lost. That was how Miriam Defensor-Santiago claimed she lost the presidency to Fidel V. Ramos.

It happened before; it can happen again.

* * *

A bright spot in the senatorial race (at least in the early returns) is that new faces are in the winning circle, the movie stars are not rating as high as expected, and some *trapos* are trailing. Making a surprise showing is Jamby Madrigal (KNP), who is ranked 5th as of this writing, and Pia Cayetano (K-4), ranked 8th. Boots Anson-Roa (KNP) is within striking distance at 17. However, her fellow movie stars—Bong Revilla, Jinggoy Estrada and Lito Lapid—are not faring as well as the surveys predicted.

Reelectionist senators and former senators—Rodolfo Biazon, Robert Barbers, Ernie Maceda, Orly Mercado, Kit Tatad, John Osmeña and Robert Jaworski—are limping behind. On the other hand, underdog Frank Chavez in the Roco ticket is fighting it out with them close to the winning circle.

Sadly, none of the Muslim candidates—Amina Rasul, Digs Dilangalen and Doc Hussin—are even mentioned in the tabulations, but that is because the votes from Mindanao and the Muslim provinces are not yet in.

* * *

An indication of the firm grip the Iglesia ni Cristo has on its members is that in the precincts in Barangay New Era, the communities behind its main church in Quezon City, candidates who were not on the INC sample ballot got zero. The counting was finished very early since all the ballots were like carbon copies of the INC sample ballot.

It is easy to understand why INC members vote like sheep. In communities where only INC members live, a few votes that stray from the INC sample ballot would be a big scandal. An investigation can easily ferret out the disobedient members who can be expelled from their church and their communities.

Some members I talked to said they were not happy over the choices made by their leaders and would have preferred to vote for other candidates but that they were afraid to disobey orders. For example, they had been taught earlier not to vote for women as leaders, but this time they were told to vote for a woman for President.

And do you know that INC members actually spy on their neighbors to find out how they voted? One housewife said her husband accompanied her inside the polling booth to make sure she voted for the candidates on the INC sample ballot.

In other words, there is no democracy within the INC. The members don't have the free will that God gave to all human beings. There is only dictation from the leaders, a virtual martial-law regime. I have no quarrel with their leaders dictating the religious teachings of their church, but voting for leaders of government is something else. That is no longer religion. That is already meddling in politics and government, acts that are prohibited by the Constitution because they have been abused before and may still be abused now.

If we don't watch out, we may become another Iran with Filipino ayatollahs having the power of life and death over citizens, like the priests during the Inquisition having the power of life and death over the people or the friars having the power of life and death over Filipinos during the Spanish regime.

Rizal and Bonifacio, the propagandists and the Katipuneros, as well as the other earlier revolutionaries, saw this danger more than 100 years ago. But like most of the Filipino *ilustrados* during the Spanish regime, the present *ilustrados* don't recognize its return now, though no longer in the person of Spanish friars but in the person of Filipino religious leaders.

Definitions

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I WILL spare the networks the trouble of calling me to ask for my opinion of what happened in these elections. It has three defining characteristics, none of which augurs well for the future of elections in this country.

The first is the utter lack of issue. The last two presidential elections at least had some kind of presidential debate. The first one featured Mang Pandoy, an odd-job man who was often jobless, and the second, Evangeline, the girl who scavenged from the mountain of trash in Payatas, whose plights earned much column space and air time from media quite apart from ritual displays of solicitousness from the candidates.

There was no debate this time. I did suggest Elmer Jacinto as the new Filipino Everyman. Jacinto is the young man from Basilan who topped the medical board exams but accepted a job as a caregiver in New York. He embodied the true Filipino dilemma at this point. The question today is: What can you say to a Filipino to prevent him from leaving the country to clean the toilet bowls of the world?

But nobody took up the suggestion. FPJ merely avoided the call for a debate, as did GMA who said she would debate only with FPJ. With reason: A debate with the other candidates would have drawn attention to her actual record rather than the hypothetical future she wanted Filipinos to imagine with FPJ. The only issue that threatened to break out was GMA's use of public funds to campaign, but that fell through in part because the other candidates could not unite on it and in part for lack of public outrage. This country has gotten so inured to iniquity it has learned to factor a President campaigning with taxpayers' money as a natural expectation.

That brings us to the second defining characteristic of the elections. What took the place of issues? The answer is: surveys.

Surveys came out at the rate of nearly one every three weeks, and they pretty much became the center of public attention. The only question was how accurate they were, and whether or not they were being manipulated. The elections were not about how fit the candidates were for public office—that question the GMA camp successfully managed to tack on only to FPJ—they were about how well the candidates were doing in the surveys.

It should be interesting for graduate students, or professors, to do a study of the role of surveys in these elections and their role in future ones. Exposure in media remains the most decisive element in Philippine elections (since 1992 anyway, replacing machinery and resources for the dubious honor) but there is one element that has been added to it. That is surveys. Surveys offer extended prime-time media exposure. If these elections are anything to go by, getting good survey ratings over a period of time may now beat even being in show biz or television. You do not have to be a television host or a movie star to win, you need only be projected either as the strongest candidate, or the "candidate to beat," or as the candidate that is likely to be the one to beat. The last was the GMA storyline. If she wins these elections, it would be fairly safe to say these elections were decided by surveys.

There are two reasons why surveys exert a powerful impact on this country. The first is that this culture more than most others is exploitable by the bandwagon effect. This is a culture that extols belonging, getting along, agreeableness. This is not a culture that extols individualism, independence or feistiness. "Going along with the others" is the norm, not the exception. That makes it the easiest thing in the world for surveys to condition voters' minds.

The second reason is that for all their vaunted scientific attributes, surveys do not act as scholarly studies, they act as vulgar advertisements. What makes them "accurate" is not their intrinsic properties, it is their self-fulfilling dynamic. It is not their rigorous methods, it is their seductive appeal. Particularly in this culture: You tell Filipinos a candidate is strong, they will flock to him or her. That is part of belonging, getting along, being agreeable. No one wants to be outside the community the neighborhood, the collective. No one wants to be "*taong labas.*"

I do not know if surveys should be subject to regulation. I personally think they should be proscribed during the campaign period itself. They do not add to the quality of elections, they subtract from it. They do not make public office a question of fitness, they turn it into a question of numbers. The other option is for media, whose stated goal is to make things better rather than worse, not to use them at all. Otherwise the cardinal rule in the next elections will simply be: Work on the survey-takers.

The last defining characteristic of these elections is the use of public funds to campaign. That was what the framers of the Constitution expressly wanted to prevent, which was why they stipulated only a single term for presidents. So no incumbent could conscript the whole of government to campaign. That was not what happened. A legal effort to get GMA to go on leave went for naught, the Supreme Court abdicating its duty by taking its own version of the "Fifth Amendment," i.e. that it is not a trier of facts, only of principle.

The implications of GMA's uses of public funds to campaign will have a very profound impact not just on future elections but on the conduct of government itself. Particularly if she wins. If the voters have not just allowed her to use public funds for private ends but have rewarded her with another term, where will she get the resolve to use public funds for public ends?

Those are the defining characteristics of the last elections. They define a not very bright future.

Moving away from political turbulence

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE 2004 election put to the test the issue of whether Philippine democracy has broken out of the vicious cycle of political leadership change determined by people power turbulence in which two extra-constitutional elements—military intervention and mob rule—played pivotal and central roles in overthrowing hated regimes. Regardless of who wins the presidency, the election sent the message that the country has transited from tumultuous people-power politics and has returned control of politics to the people using the vote, rather than guns, to reroute political change back to the hands of the people.

The election marked the watershed that returned politics to constitutional channels. The message is that the people have kicked the habit of people power as a mode for political change. Collaterally, the election also slammed the door on the face of military intervention as the decisive arbiter in breaking political stand-offs.

Although, the flaws of the election mechanism stood out in bold relief in Monday's polls, it can no longer be denied that the people exercised the right to change government, thereby returning politics to the normal mode of elections. As it now appears certain President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has been given a fresh mandate to run the country for six years in her own right, the election has put an end to a transitional presidency installed through extra-constitutional means, legitimized by military power and by judicial fiat. How large an electoral mandate will cloak the next administration will be determined by the final official count, but it is no longer undeniable that the next Macapagal presidency will wear a new mantle of legitimacy, enjoying a mandate freely given by the people.

The size of the vote for the new presidency is of secondary importance to the fact that it has been installed by popular vote. Whether or not the final and official Commission on Elections count says she won more than 50 percent of the national vote in a fair and free election, what is more important is that she has been given a mandate and will have a firmer foundation to govern than that provided by military intervention and decisions by the Supreme Court.

In the period following the Marcos dictatorship, no Philippine leader has ever gotten a majority mandate. The largest plurality in the post-Marcos era was garnered by Joseph Estrada who won 40 percent of the votes in the 1998 election. Prior to Estrada, Fidel Ramos won the presidential election in 1992, with 24 percent of the vote, but this narrow mandate did not prevent Ramos from running an effective government and constructing a coalition based on consensus in a Congress in which his new party, Lakas, did not hold majority of the seats.

Even the highly popular Corazon Aquino took office without a clear-cut electoral mandate. The 1986 snap election was stolen by Marcos at a time when the unofficial count showed that her opposition coalition had won with an overwhelming vote, and when Marcos rigged the election result with the official count of a subverted Comelec, the electoral hijack triggered a military mutiny and popular rising now called Edsa I, ending in the installation of Aquino as president through people power. In 1987, a national plebiscite gave a ringing endorsement to the new democratic Constitution with a nearly 90 percent vote.

Still the results of the plebiscite did not give a direct mandate to the Aquino presidency. And this ambiguity gave the heirs of Marcos the loophole to challenge the legitimacy of the Aquino government and provided the incentive for seven failed military coups.

Joseph Estrada's abuse of power revived the disease of people power and military intervention. The installation of then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as President, through the irregular and extra-constitutional means of military withdrawal of support from the elected government of Estrada, left the first Macapagal presidency vulnerable to persistent challenges to its legitimacy.

This election can therefore be considered as a correction course that breaks the spell of extra-constitutional means of changing presidents. It brings the nation back to the normal electoral milieu of political change.

The implication of the return to normal electoral politics as the underpinning for political change is that it deprives military adventurists of an excuse to destabilize or to topple a popularly elected government. It also foreshadows a diminished interventionist role in politics for the Supreme Court. During the first Macapagal presidency, the Court was forced to play an extraordinary role of keeping political stability not because it loved being the savior of Philippine democracy but because many legal challenges were made on the government's legitimacy.

The next Macapagal administration should enter office with much fewer handicaps than the three- year-government that spanned People Power II and the 2004 election.

Despite defects in the election machinery, there is no doubt that the election clearly stamped the next government as an elected government, and not one that was imposed upon us, whether the outcome of the voting agreed with our preferences or not. The process of establishing political legitimacy is more important than who won. The significance of this election is that it put behind us an era of political volatility fueled by mob rule disguised as people power.

Time to prepare for computerization

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

YOU would think we would have gotten it right by now. But reports on the immediate aftermath of Monday's voting contained much the same complaints that have been aired election after election: missing voters' names, faulty registration procedures, missing ballots or ballots gone astray, nondelivery of election supplies, flying voters, even brownouts in the middle of the counting.

But you could say we've gotten used to the chaos and confusion. Unlike in other electoral exercises when everyone seemed to be in a state of hyper-alertness and vigilance for any sign of cheating, this year's polls seemed to be viewed with, if not complacence, then resignation. I don't think the foul-ups surprised anyone. And with an incumbent contesting the presidency for the first time in almost two decades, most political observers conceded the fact that not only would government resources be used for the President's campaign, but that some amount of cheating would take place.

But was the cheating of a scale that would significantly affect the outcome of the race for national posts? Was Fernando Poe Jr. right to wax indignant in his press conference yesterday at what he deemed to be massive fraud in the conduct of elections?

Veteran observers assert that cheating can only influence the outcome of elections to a limited extent. A "landslide" would be very difficult to cover up, and once a favored candidate starts pulling away, it would be nearly impossible to pull down that candidate by means of anomalies, not even the dreaded *dagdag-bawas*.

With just about 10-20 percent of the ballots cast counted and canvassed (as of this writing), it's still difficult to say who has emerged as the clear winner. The race is still "neck and neck," to use this paper's racing analogy.

* * *

MONTHS before the voting, most everyone agreed that the lead between the eventual winner and the "runner-up" would be slim indeed, given the narrowing gap between FPJ, the early leader, and GMA. Many feared the "Taiwan scenario," where a hairline lead (less than one percent of votes cast, if I remember right) sparked street protests and weeks of instability.

Randy David, appearing on GMA-7's "Eleksyon 2004," said that it is not the election results per se that could reassure local and foreign investors. Regardless of who wins, he said, what could burnish the Philippines' image before the world are the credibility of the election results and the image of stability this would thereby create.

But when no less than the opposition standard bearer calls a press conference and angrily denounces what he perceives as a "trend" to cheat him and his party mates, then he is putting this image of stability on the line. It may be too early to declare the polls fraudulent, but FPJ and the KNP may have been motivated by the results of the partial and unofficial counts that so far have given the edge to Ms Macapagal.

My own unsolicited advice, absent concrete proof of cheating on a massive scale, would be for Poe and the KNP to collect as much evidence as they can, document the instances of alleged cheating as completely as they can, and bring their case to the courts.

* * *

ANYONE keeping vigil over the ballot counting would have come to an inescapable conclusion: We need computerized voting and counting!

These days when even lowly laborers collect their salaries via ATM, when families of overseas Filipino workers keep track of remittances by electronic means and keep in touch through real-time chatting on the Internet, it makes no sense why we should continue to rely on the messy, confusing and time-consuming manual process.

Of course, the Comelec may well blame the Supreme Court for invalidating their computerization contract. But the poll body, past and present commissioners and chairpersons included, is really to blame for this mess. The Computerized Voting Law already mandated that the poll body begin to computerize their operations but they dragged their feet and persisted in pursuing an unnecessary registration project instead, resulting in millions of squandered public funds.

The time for the Comelec to begin preparing for computerization is now, applying many of the lessons learned in Monday's exercise.

The only positive aspect of this messy situation is that the visiting Afghan delegation, in the country to learn what they can from the Philippine elections in preparation for their own polls later this year, would have learned many things to apply to their own situation. If we had been able to computerize our polls, then perhaps the Afghans might have simply thrown up their hands in frustration, for how do you bring computers into a country that has been essentially bombed back to the Stone Age? But as it is, the Afghans surely learned a lot from Monday's chaos and confusion. I only hope they didn't learn how to cheat as well!

* * *

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I felt sorry for them, but couldn't help smiling. My, how we Filipinos love campaigns and elections! And how we value the power that comes with exercising our right to vote!

Contrast this with the United States where a clear and sunny day is sure to lead to a drop in voter turn-out as most people would prefer to picnic and have fun than waste the weather by lining up in front of the polling booths.

Our elections may be messy, the counting may take longer than is civilized, but at least we still care enough to raise a howl when something goes wrong.

A tektite falls in Pampanga

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

TRUMAN Capote got the title of his book "Answered Prayers" from Teresa de Avila, the 16th-century saint, mystic and doctor of the Church. She is supposed to have said (and rightly so) that more tears are shed over answered prayers than unanswered ones.

The elections are over and Philippine life returns to normal regardless of who is installed in the Palace by the Pasig. In six years we will know whether to laugh or cry about our answered prayers last Monday. My answered prayer was simply to cope with an INQUIRER deadline without my books and notes. Fortunately Fray Francisco Musni e-mailed from San Agustin in Intramuros his "scribbling" on a tektite that fell in Pampanga in 1859.

Tektites reminded me of Rizal gathering all sorts of natural and animal specimens in Dapitan for posting to the Dresden Museum and various scholars around Europe. Every school child knows that there is a bug, a frog and a winged lizard whose Latin scientific name ends with "rizali," a tribute to our hero who made three contributions to the ongoing classification of nature.

What is not widely known is that Rizal is also considered the Father of Philippine Archeology for a modest collection of pre-colonial specimens. We know he sent a small gold *piloncito*, excavated from Mandaluyong, to his friend Blumentritt, stating that it was pre-Spanish currency. We also know that during his exile in Dapitan, he was shown or given polished stone tools that Dapiteños believed were the broken teeth that lightning left when it bit the ground. Rizal correctly identified these as pre-historic adzes. I wouldn't be surprised if Rizal had an *"aerolito"* in his cabinet of curiosities, pieces of black stone that fell from the sky that we know today as tektites. Fray Francisco referred to these with their indigenous Kapampangan name, *taclang batuin*, as simple folk believed these to be excrement from space.

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Torture and terror

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That was Sen. Edward Kennedy commenting, during an investigative hearing, on the abuses of Iraqi prisoners by US occupation troops. He was referring to one of the photographs that had been leaked to the press, one of the milder pictures, it turns out, carefully cropped and digitally censored to lessen the impact of the brutality. One of the latest photographs, printed in The New Yorker, shows a naked Iraqi man cowering in fear as dogs are poised to attack him. There is another photograph, which The New Yorker decided not to publish, showing the man on the floor, in a pool of blood with his leg showing a deep bite wound.

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Michael L. Tan

The local response has been mainly reprinted news articles from international wire services, buried in the inside pages. In contrast, newspapers throughout the world, especially in Arab countries, have featured the stories on their front pages, accompanied by editorials expressing outrage.

I will admit that on my part, my initial reaction was that there was one isolated incident occurring in Abu Ghraib prison. Of course, even one case of torture is never acceptable and if it had not been for the elections, I would have written a column about the abuses. Over the last few days though, with more exposés, including revelations that there are many more photographs and videotapes, and that abuses took place not just in Abu Ghraib but in other facilities, I'm beginning to believe this was part of a systematic campaign of terror on the part of the US government.

"So?" some of you may be reacting, as others have, "wasn't Saddam Hussein far worse?"

Sure, but let's not forget that the United States and the United Kingdom (whose soldiers have also been implicated in other abuses) invaded Iraq supposedly to liberate the Iraqis from Saddam to establish democracy and respect for human rights.

Now the world has even more reason to question the real motives of the US government for their invasion, and to wonder if George W. Bush even understands what human rights means. Yes, he's apologized for what has happened and called the incidents "abhorrent" but he has done little else. Paul Bremer, head of the "coalition" occupation forces in Iraq, has done even less, not even bothering to visit the detention centers.

Of course, this impunity probably makes sense when you think of other moves made by the Bush administration during the last two years. First, they opposed the establishment of an International Criminal Court that would try, among others, war crimes. The position of the US government was that Americans should be exempt from prosecution by the court.

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The cameras. People wonder why photographs and videotapes were taken. One theory was that it was a perverse form of trophy taking but now with revelations that there were many more photographs and videotapes, it's clear that the camera was itself part of the torture process. Especially in Muslim cultures, with its strict prohibition on nudity, having your picture taken while masturbating, or being made to simulate oral sex and "pyramiding" (piling bodies one on top of the other) are totally demoralizing.

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Moving away from political turbulence

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE 2004 election put to the test the issue of whether Philippine democracy has broken out of the vicious cycle of political leadership change determined by people power turbulence in which two extra-constitutional elements—military intervention and mob rule—played pivotal and central roles in overthrowing hated regimes. Regardless of who wins the presidency, the election sent the message that the country has transited from tumultuous people-power politics and has returned control of politics to the people using the vote, rather than guns, to reroute political change back to the hands of the people.

The election marked the watershed that returned politics to constitutional channels. The message is that the people have kicked the habit of people power as a mode for political change. Collaterally, the election also slammed the door on the face of military intervention as the decisive arbiter in breaking political stand-offs.

Although, the flaws of the election mechanism stood out in bold relief in Monday's polls, it can no longer be denied that the people exercised the right to change government, thereby returning politics to the normal mode of elections. As it now appears certain President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has been given a fresh mandate to run the country for six years in her own right, the election has put an end to a transitional presidency installed through extra-constitutional means, legitimized by military power and by judicial fiat. How large an electoral mandate will cloak the next administration will be determined by the final official count, but it is no longer undeniable that the next Macapagal presidency will wear a new mantle of legitimacy, enjoying a mandate freely given by the people.

The size of the vote for the new presidency is of secondary importance to the fact that it has been installed by popular vote. Whether or not the final and official Commission on Elections count says she won more than 50 percent of the national vote in a fair and free election, what is more important is that she has been given a mandate and will have a firmer foundation to govern than that provided by military intervention and decisions by the Supreme Court.

In the period following the Marcos dictatorship, no Philippine leader has ever gotten a majority mandate. The largest plurality in the post-Marcos era was garnered by Joseph Estrada who won 40 percent of the votes in the 1998 election. Prior to Estrada, Fidel Ramos won the presidential election in 1992, with 24 percent of the vote, but this narrow mandate did not prevent Ramos from running an effective government and constructing a coalition based on consensus in a Congress in which his new party, Lakas, did not hold majority of the seats.

Even the highly popular Corazon Aquino took office without a clear-cut electoral mandate. The 1986 snap election was stolen by Marcos at a time when the unofficial count showed that her opposition coalition had won with an overwhelming vote, and when Marcos rigged the election result with the official count of a subverted Comelec, the electoral hijack triggered a military mutiny and popular rising now called Edsa I, ending in the installation of Aquino as president through people power. In 1987, a national plebiscite gave a ringing endorsement to the new democratic Constitution with a nearly 90 percent vote.

Still the results of the plebiscite did not give a direct mandate to the Aquino presidency. And this ambiguity gave the heirs of Marcos the loophole to challenge the legitimacy of the Aquino government and provided the incentive for seven failed military coups.

Joseph Estrada's abuse of power revived the disease of people power and military intervention. The installation of then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as President, through the irregular and extra-constitutional means of military withdrawal of support from the elected government of Estrada, left the first Macapagal presidency vulnerable to persistent challenges to its legitimacy.

This election can therefore be considered as a correction course that breaks the spell of extra-constitutional means of changing presidents. It brings the nation back to the normal electoral milieu of political change.

The implication of the return to normal electoral politics as the underpinning for political change is that it deprives military adventurists of an excuse to destabilize or to topple a popularly elected government. It also foreshadows a diminished interventionist role in politics for the Supreme Court. During the first Macapagal presidency, the Court was forced to play an extraordinary role of keeping political stability not because it loved being the savior of Philippine democracy but because many legal challenges were made on the government's legitimacy.

The next Macapagal administration should enter office with much fewer handicaps than the three- year-government that spanned People Power II and the 2004 election.

Despite defects in the election machinery, there is no doubt that the election clearly stamped the next government as an elected government, and not one that was imposed upon us, whether the outcome of the voting agreed with our preferences or not. The process of establishing political legitimacy is more important than who won. The significance of this election is that it put behind us an era of political volatility fueled by mob rule disguised as people power.

Time to prepare for computerization

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

YOU would think we would have gotten it right by now. But reports on the immediate aftermath of Monday's voting contained much the same complaints that have been aired election after election: missing voters' names, faulty registration procedures, missing ballots or ballots gone astray, nondelivery of election supplies, flying voters, even brownouts in the middle of the counting.

But you could say we've gotten used to the chaos and confusion. Unlike in other electoral exercises when everyone seemed to be in a state of hyper-alertness and vigilance for any sign of cheating, this year's polls seemed to be viewed with, if not complacence, then resignation. I don't think the foul-ups surprised anyone. And with an incumbent contesting the presidency for the first time in almost two decades, most political observers conceded the fact that not only would government resources be used for the President's campaign, but that some amount of cheating would take place.

But was the cheating of a scale that would significantly affect the outcome of the race for national posts? Was Fernando Poe Jr. right to wax indignant in his press conference yesterday at what he deemed to be massive fraud in the conduct of elections?

Veteran observers assert that cheating can only influence the outcome of elections to a limited extent. A "landslide" would be very difficult to cover up, and once a favored candidate starts pulling away, it would be nearly impossible to pull down that candidate by means of anomalies, not even the dreaded *dagdag-bawas*.

With just about 10-20 percent of the ballots cast counted and canvassed (as of this writing), it's still difficult to say who has emerged as the clear winner. The race is still "neck and neck," to use this paper's racing analogy.

* * *

MONTHS before the voting, most everyone agreed that the lead between the eventual winner and the "runner-up" would be slim indeed, given the narrowing gap between FPJ, the early leader, and GMA. Many feared the "Taiwan scenario," where a hairline lead (less than one percent of votes cast, if I remember right) sparked street protests and weeks of instability.

Randy David, appearing on GMA-7's "Eleksyon 2004," said that it is not the election results per se that could reassure local and foreign investors. Regardless of who wins, he said, what could burnish the Philippines' image before the world are the credibility of the election results and the image of stability this would thereby create.

But when no less than the opposition standard bearer calls a press conference and angrily denounces what he perceives as a "trend" to cheat him and his party mates, then he is putting this image of stability on the line. It may be too early to declare the polls fraudulent, but FPJ and the KNP may have been motivated by the results of the partial and unofficial counts that so far have given the edge to Ms Macapagal.

My own unsolicited advice, absent concrete proof of cheating on a massive scale, would be for Poe and the KNP to collect as much evidence as they can, document the instances of alleged cheating as completely as they can, and bring their case to the courts.

* * *

ANYONE keeping vigil over the ballot counting would have come to an inescapable conclusion: We need computerized voting and counting!

These days when even lowly laborers collect their salaries via ATM, when families of overseas Filipino workers keep track of remittances by electronic means and keep in touch through real-time chatting on the Internet, it makes no sense why we should continue to rely on the messy, confusing and time-consuming manual process.

Of course, the Comelec may well blame the Supreme Court for invalidating their computerization contract. But the poll body, past and present commissioners and chairpersons included, is really to blame for this mess. The Computerized Voting Law already mandated that the poll body begin to computerize their operations but they dragged their feet and persisted in pursuing an unnecessary registration project instead, resulting in millions of squandered public funds.

The time for the Comelec to begin preparing for computerization is now, applying many of the lessons learned in Monday's exercise.

The only positive aspect of this messy situation is that the visiting Afghan delegation, in the country to learn what they can from the Philippine elections in preparation for their own polls later this year, would have learned many things to apply to their own situation. If we had been able to computerize our polls, then perhaps the Afghans might have simply thrown up their hands in frustration, for how do you bring computers into a country that has been essentially bombed back to the Stone Age? But as it is, the Afghans surely learned a lot from Monday's chaos and confusion. I only hope they didn't learn how to cheat as well!

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Helpless against graft?

WHY does it take so long to bring to closure court cases involving government funds, such as graft and corruption?

I cannot understand the delays. I can understand if the cases involve murder, homicide, robbery, etc., where testimonies are not enough and lawyers have to look to credible physical evidence such as those obtaining from a professional investigation or laboratory work.

Crimes involving money, however, can readily be evidenced by bank account records, financial reports, Bureau of Internal Revenue files and other legal papers. These records can be used as material components, enough to either acquit or convict a defendant. Financial events can be reconstructed, in a heartbeat. Or interpolated. So, why the delays?

So many prominent cases of corruption fly all over, yet barely a trickle—just the negligible minor ones—get decided by the courts.

I hope the government (the Executive, Congress and judicial branches) can do better.

—PETE SALAMBAT,
Cartooner2000@aol.com

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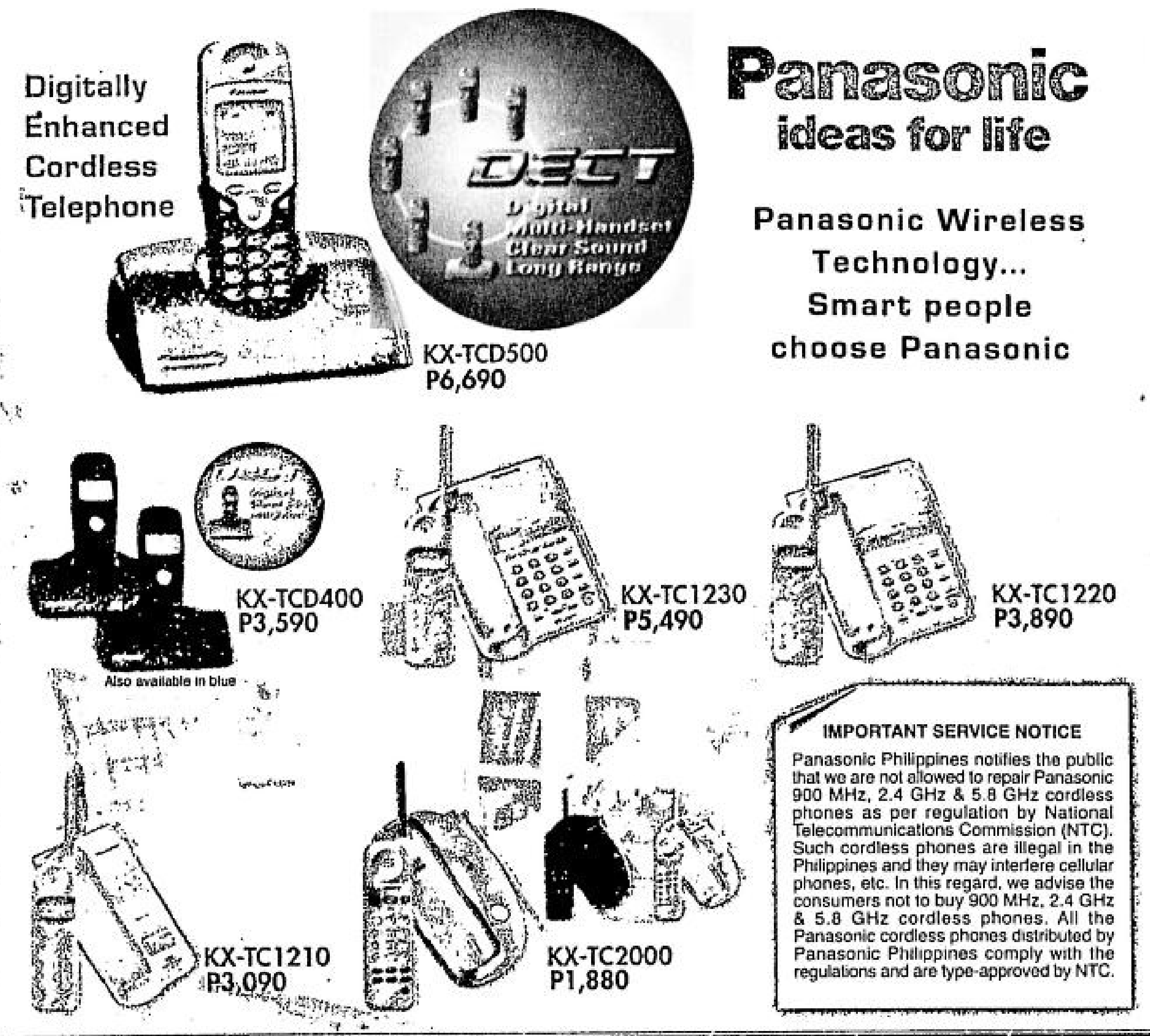

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Inglorious museum

IN THE INQUIRER'S "Letters" section last April 23, an Angeles City man wrote about the "grandness" of making a movie celebrating the heroism of the "last samurai warriors," the kamikaze pilots who crashed their planes into US ships at the end of World War II.

A "noble" class, says he, bound by a "code of honor and patriotism" in the belief that their suicide would guarantee a glorious hereafter.

I have no problem with a person's religious beliefs, even though the divine warrior whose Zero plane slammed into my (Navy lieutenant) uncle's destroyer in Leyte Gulf blew both to kingdom come.

But I have a problem with the letter writer's fascination with the fact that the first kamikaze pilots were based in the Philippines. As if where they began their journey to immortality is more meaningful than how they ended 12,000 American lives and left 36,000 others in flames.

Isn't that a little like someone in Germany today glorifying Hitler's "sacred imperative" to rid Europe of (six-million) Jews in order to purify the white race?

In fact, the letter writer owns a museum (named after him) in Angeles City. A gallery of memorabilia that exists solely to romanticize the same kind of "purification" process that reduced the World Trade Center to ashes.

How many Filipinos, I wonder, would visit a museum that glorifies the Japanese occupation's excesses of World War II?

And lastly, how many Japanese today would visit a kamikaze shrine which in their country would probably be against the law? (And political stupidity for anyone found visiting one here.)

A museum too embarrassing, in my opinion, for anybody to want to visit, and yet some people apparently do.

—ELLIOT ANDERSON,
P.O. box 2769,
Ozamiz City

Minimizing the PPA

WITH the deregulation of the power industry, the private sector constructed power plants in excess of the needed total capacity, then charged the unsuspecting public for the idle capacity, through power purchase adjustment (PPA), to attain the desired profit margin.

Meanwhile, the government-owned National Power Corporation had to opt for full operation rather than shutting down some of its power plants and letting them go idle (which would have resulted in bigger losses). But the Napocor does not have unrestricted take-or-pay contracts similar to that enjoyed by the privately owned independent power producers (IPPs).

While the investment on the excess or reserve capacity has to earn a rate of return, this situation can be alleviated in favor of the public. Firstly, instead of the private IPPs charging Meralco for the unused but guaranteed capacity, the government should have the IPPs operate in full and let the government-owned Napocor maintain the reserve capacity with similar guaranteed payment if not used. This way, the favorable treatment enjoyed by the IPPs would go to the Filipino people—owners of the Napocor, whose power plants would last longer because they would not be subjected to fast wear and tear while in reserve.

Secondly, to minimize the take-or-pay charge on reserve capacity, the government's power plants should not be 100 percent privatized. Selected plants, with a total capacity equivalent to the grid reserve, should remain with the Napocor. This way, reserve capacity would not have to be charged at the regular rate of return demanded by private investors but just at the rate imposed by creditors, or even at break-even rate, because its objective is service, not profit. As an instrument of national policy, the Napocor should stay where private investors fear to tread—in the field of public service at a minimal rate of return.

In any case, the per kilowatt-hour (kWh) charge for the unused capacity should not include variable costs, like bunker fuel oil, that are not incurred while the power plants are on standby.

In addition, unlike in an April 2003 Meralco bill wherein the guaranteed PPA rate of P2.899 per kWh was higher than the energy charge of P2 per kWh, the guaranteed rate charged by IPPs to Meralco should not be passed on at a peso-for-peso basis to Meralco customers, as the ratio of unused capacity to used capacity is low, not one-is-to-one. Instead, the weighted average of the used and unused capacity charges should be billed to customers, and this should lead to lower PPA charge. Incidentally, the government, which initiated the change in the Meralco billing system, should correct itself and require power distributors to restore the disclosure of the PPA rate in their monthly bills. This will enable the public to promptly spot unusually high PPA rates, these being prone to abuse.

—MARCELO L. TECSON,
San Miguel, Bulacan,
martecson@yahoo.com

Monkey trick

LABOR Secretary Paticia Sto. Tomas explained there would be "no wage, hike on Labor Day" (PDI, 4/27/04) as it might be misconstrued as vote buying. What a monkey trick! It was not election season in May 2003 and workers went home from the Labor Day rites empty handed. There was no election in May 2002 and not a modicum of new benefits for employees came. For once, let us call a spade a spade! There has been no adjustment in minimum wage in the last three years because it would hurt the business and industry sectors. In this season, alas, there are many variants of vote buying.

Another unmistakable variant is the distribution of PhilHealth cards even to non-traditional members of the SSS or of the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. Whoever masterminded this campaign strategy must be a genius. These cards are indeed better than cash; their recipients will surely vote for President Macapagal-Arroyo. Otherwise, if she lost in the coming polls, these much-ballyhooed cards might be dishonored by her successor. The thing is, like my SSS and other IDs, the PhilHealth card I hold carries my own name and photo, and these cards display the picture of the President. My goodness, I did not know that there is ingenuity in absurdity.

And so last Labor Day, instead of the elusive wage hike, Metro Manila workers got free train rides, discounts in commercial establishments, tickets to a professional basketball league or to a concert and other *consuelo de bobos*. Alas, that is adding insult to injury for the majority of the nation's labor force that has long been reeling from unlivable wages in the midst of ballooning inflation.

—RUDY L. CORONEL,
10 Venus St.,
Golden Country Homes,
Alangilan, Batangas City

Behind Roco's success at DepEd

THIS is in connection with two recent columns of Conrado de Quiros, which were published in the INQUIRER on April 15 and 26. Let me reproduce the portions of special interest to the Department of Education.

"(Secretary Roco's) record in the Department of Education, turning it from a cesspool into the country's No. 1 department, speaks for itself." (PDI, 4/15/04)

"(Secretary Roco) once cured a sick institution called the Department of Education, an institution that was knocking at death's door. Talk of miracle cures, in but a year's time he turned it around from one of the country's most corrupt departments to its most efficient one." (PDI, 4/26/04)

Perhaps De Quiros exaggerates in describing the DepEd at the time of Secretary Raul Roco's coming—as a "cesspool," the country's most corrupt institution waiting at death's door. No matter, I think we can still accept with pride the recognition of the DepEd, by as caustic a critic of this administration as De Quiros, as the No. 1 most efficient agency in the bureaucracy. Whatever Roco might have achieved during his term must, of course, also redound in some measure to the credit of President Macapagal-Arroyo who appointed him and supported his efforts.

I will call attention to another point that De Quiros appears to ignore. I do not believe Roco could have achieved whatever it is De Quiros believes he was able to achieve in one year without the assistance and support of the teachers, officials and staff.

—EDILBERTO C. DE JESUS,
secretary,
Department of Education,
DepEd Complex,
Meralco Avenue, Pasig City

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Pacificador takes lead over Antique rivals

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

SAN JOSE, Antique—Detained former assemblyman Arturo Pacificador is leading in the race for vice governor, according to partial and unofficial results of the quick count conducted by the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel).

As of 11:30 a.m. yesterday, Pacificador had 3,016 votes, ahead of his two rivals—incumbent provincial board members Rhodora Cadiao and Eric Otayde.

Cadiao of the Lakas-CMD had 1,988 votes and 1,194 votes for Otayde of the Liberal Party.

The votes all came from 46 out of the 125 precincts of the capital town of San Jose. The province has 18 towns with a total of 1,249 precincts.

Aside from San Jose, Pacificador said he was relying on votes from the southern towns especially his hometown Hamtic, which has the third largest number of voters next to Sibalom and San Jose.

Antique Rep. Exequiel Javier, a partymate of Cadiao, said it was still early to determine who was leading in the vice gubernatorial race.

Confidence

He said he was confident that Cadiao would win because they were expecting to get the bulk of her votes from the northern towns of the province including her hometown Culasi.

Pacificador filed his candidacy despite being detained at the Antique provincial jail to face charges of murder, frustrated murder and attempted murder along with 17 others in connection with the murder of former Antique governor Evelio Javier on Feb. 11, 1986.

Pacificador had asked the Antique Regional Trial Court to grant him bail to campaign for his candidacy because he believed the court would be unable to resolve the case before the May 10 elections.

But in a one-page order dated May 3, Judge Rudy Castrojas, who is presiding over the case, denied Pacificador's motion, saying he needed more time to study the evidence presented by Pacificador in the 18-year-old case.

The trial of the case ended last Feb. 10. Castrojas is expected to resolve the case at the latest in June under court rules.

Slipped out

But Pacificador was able to attend a candidates' forum on May 3 organized by Namfrel and the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting at the Evelio B. Javier Freedom Park in this town, even if Castrojas denied his motion that he be allowed to attend the activity.

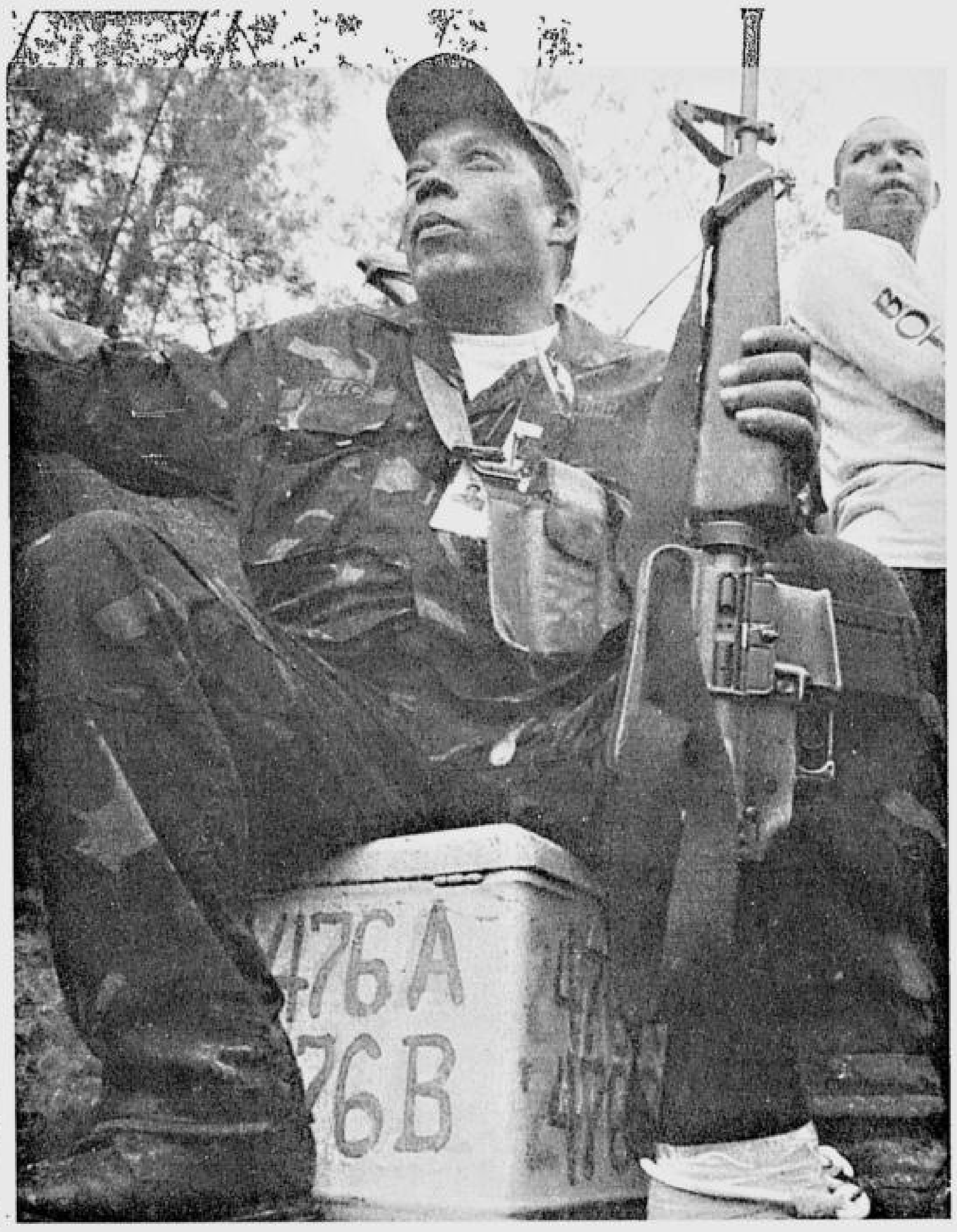
Pacificador explained that he knew only of the court order, disallowing him to attend the forum, after he delivered his speech. He also pointed out that private prosecutor Aurelio Trampe did not oppose his motion.

A former ally of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos, Pacificador ran for congressman in the lone district of the province in 1995 but finished third behind Jovito Plameras and Javier.

PACIFICADOR/A19

DAY AFTER POLLS

Tension as counting starts



SAFEKEEPING
Efforts to protect ballot boxes take different forms like a soldier sitting on one in Cotabato City at the start of voting early Monday.
RYAN LIM/PDI MINDANAO

Central, Northern Luzon bets trade fraud charges

DUPAX DEL SUR, Nueva Vizcaya—Three ballot boxes were snatched allegedly by the reelectionist mayor in the remote village of Binuangan in Dupax del Norte town on Tuesday dawn, according to a report reaching the military here.

Col. Dacy Marinas, commanding officer of the Army's 54th Infantry Battalion, said the report indicated that Dupax del Norte Mayor Isaias Almuete and three men took the ballot boxes from three precincts at the Binuangan Elementary School at 1:30 a.m. Tuesday.

According to witnesses who asked not to be identified, Almuete, allegedly armed with a rifle and accompanied by three men, fired his gun before he entered the precincts and ordered his men to take the ballot boxes.

The group loaded these into Almuete's Mitsubishi L200 pick-up then left.

When contacted for comment, Almuete denied the allegations. He said the charges were concocted by his political rivals.

But Almuete said he received reports that armed men took the ballot boxes from the precincts in Barangay Binuangan.

Members of Dupax del Norte's board of election inspectors said Almuete, a candidate of the Lakas-CMD, alighted from his vehicle and poked his gun at Sandy Wayan, a coordinator for the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino party in the area.

Reports said Almuete accused Wayan of taking a ballot box from a precinct in Sitio Diayan.

Senior Supt. Felix Caddali, provincial police director, on Tuesday asked the police's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group to conduct an independent inquiry amid the complainants' allegations of a cover up by the local police.

Tineg polls

The elections in Tineg town in Abra and the island town of Calayan in Cagayan pushed through on Monday following improved weather conditions.

Power outages were reported in Vigan City, Baguio City, Basco in Batanes and some parts of Pampanga on Monday night and Tuesday morning as the counting and canvassing of votes were ongoing.

In Pangasinan, three election officers in Urdaneta City were hurt when their tricycle was hit by a delivery van midnight of Monday.

Election officers Victoria Gandia, Jane Ave and Jessie Lapana were delivering a ballot box to the Comelec office in the city when the accident occurred.

In Bulacan, a passenger jeep loaded with food packs for the poll watchers and supporters of reelectionist Malolos City Mayor Danilo Domingo was burned by still unidentified suspects on Monday night.

In Abra, police officials in the province reported no outbreak of violence during the counting of votes.

Before the elections, the Abra police recorded several cases of election-related killings and harassment of supporters of rival political camps.

Col. Noel Mislang, commander of the Army's 41st Infantry Battalion, and Senior Supt. Artemio Hicban, attributed the generally peaceful conduct of the elections in Abra to the vigilance of law enforcers.

Power outage

Power outages and a chaotic system partially hampered the ballot counting in Baguio City and some provinces of the Cordillera.

The Philippine Information Agency-Cordillera received reports that electricity in several Ifugao villages was cut off on Monday, although the electric cooperative there blamed the National Power Corp. for the power outages.

On Tuesday morning, power was cut off in downtown Baguio. The National Movement for Free Elections suspended the counting to await the restoration of power.

Police set up checkpoints around the ballot counting area at the Baguio Convention Center as a precaution against saboteurs and election fraud.

Tarlac tension

In Tarlac, tension rose in San Manuel town as the Comelec proclaimed reelectionist Mayor Reynaldo Malazo winner with 5,173 votes.

Malazo's rival, Benjamin Tesoro, and his supporters protested his victory by claiming massive cheating. Tesoro, who was arrested on Monday together with some supporters for possessing firearms, received 3,451 votes. Tesoro was able to post bail.

The Comelec also proclaimed Ricardo Adolfo as winner in the vice mayoral race with 4,750 votes.

In Pampanga, more than 1,000 supporters of mayoral candidate Oscar Tetangco massed up in front of the Apalit town hall to protest alleged election cheating.

The Namfrel in Apalit reported that at least 6,979 registered voters in the town were not able to vote because their names were not in the computerized voters list. At least 41,546 voters voted.

According to the Namfrel, the actual precincts were only 224

TENSION/A18

Polls become big gamble in Mindanao

CANDIDATES and their supporters in Mindanao continued keeping watch over the results of their biggest gamble, running for elective posts, amid reports of cheating and as a group of financiers in Ozamiz City grabbed the chance to start a gambling racket over the election results.

But in some parts of the region, the wait for the results has increased tension.

In Tuburan, Basilan, followers of reelectionist Mayor Dore Kalahal snatched a ballot box and several sheets of official ballots at the Lower Sinangkapan Elementary School at 9:30 a.m.

The suspect, Hadja Fatma Sali, said she merely saved the election materials against armed men who were arriving at that time. The armed men were alleged followers of mayoral candidate Hadjirun Jamirin.

"I did not snatch or steal (the ballots). I just protected the ballot box and the ballots," Sali told the military and members of the Board of Election Inspectors.

The ballots were declared null and void.

In Siargao, Surigao del Norte, unidentified men fired at the house of village chief Oscar Jovero in Barangay Dapa early yesterday. Jovero is a supporter of reelectionist Mayor Alma Navarro.

No one was hurt.

Ray Sumalipao, election supervisor for Lanao del Sur, has recommended that failure of elections be declared in the towns of Lumba Bayabao, Kapatagan, Lumbatan and Sultan Dumalundong.

Sumalipao said he made the recommendation because of indiscriminate firing of guns, harass-

POLLS/A19

Delayed polls, slow count in South Luzon

EVEN as the counting of the votes have ended in most precincts yesterday, thousands of voters in several Southern Luzon precincts were still casting their ballots.

Voters in Paete, Laguna went to their respective polling precincts at 7 a.m. yesterday to accomplish their postponed elections, which was marred by the delay in the arrival of about 3,000 ballots on Monday.

About 30 police and military men did not go to sleep to guard the ballots kept inside the municipal hall.

Volunteers of the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) and Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) and other poll watchers were in full force to safeguard the process.

As the counting moved on to tabulation of election results, Namfrel coordinators found out that their quick count was not so quick after all. Fr. Nelson Tria, Namfrel chair in Camarines Sur, said the tabulation of election results had been changed from just copying the results from precincts to tabulating them based on the official results provided by the Board of Election Inspectors (BEI).

He said the previous system of quick count was actually slower and error-prone because they had to make corrections several times on different copies of election returns, and even had to call Namfrel in Manila several times to amend what they had submitted.

He said they had to wait for the BEI to finish everything before they were given a copy of the official results that took them until midnight waiting in several instances.

At about noon yesterday, the Namfrel in Naga City had only received a fraction of the official election results from their volunteers in the 35 towns and two cities in Camarines Sur and it would take them about three days to finish the tabulation of the official election results for the local officials.

Aside from the dependence on the BEI for the tabulation, he said they also had to scrutinize the accuracy of the written results. He added they reviewed the tallies and more often found errors in the counting.

Tria said most errors occurred in the inconsistency of the sum of votes against the representation of votes tallied in fives. In cases like this, he said, they followed the tallies written in the official results.

He said the quick count using text messaging in relaying the results directly to Manila from the volunteers in the areas was very ideal but did not work on the ground because they have no funds for cell phones.

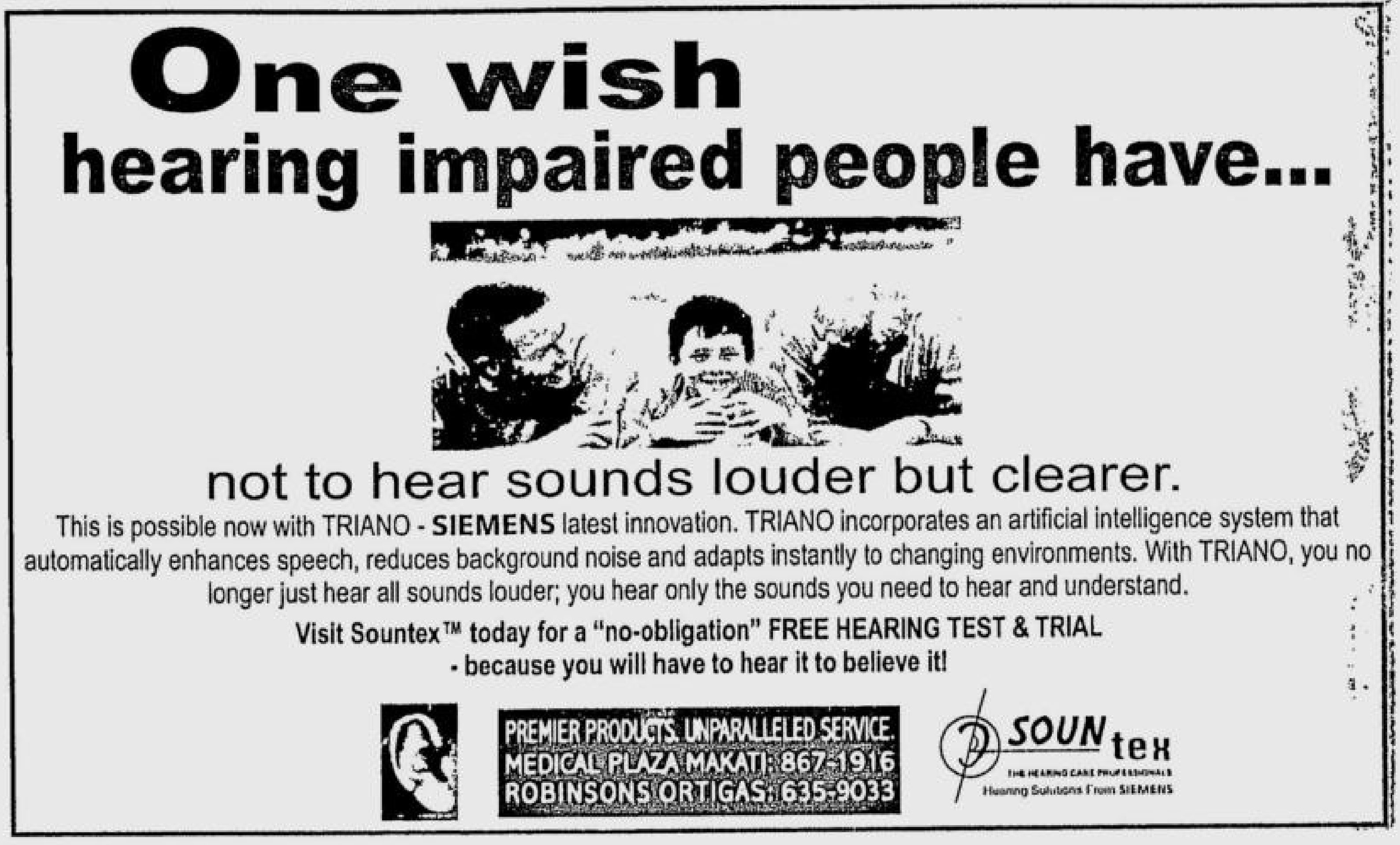
In Camarines Sur alone, the Namfrel has to tabulate election results from 5,117 precincts of which some 6,000 volunteers had been assigned.

In Virac, Catanduanes, Namfrel volunteers failed to systematically conduct their quick count due to some technical failure in the texting system, according to Catanduanes Namfrel provincial chair Rev. Fr. Laudemir Jose Gapaz.

As a result, he said, they just relied on the usual manual system and patiently waited for the most available data they could get from volunteers scattered across this island--province.

In Albay, where an eight-minute brownout was experienced Monday night, the canvassing was orderly, according to Fr. Jovic Lobrigo, Namfrel consul-

DELAYED/A19



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By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

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PACIFICADOR A19

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DUPAX DEL SUR, Nueva Vizcaya—Three ballot boxes were snatched allegedly by the reelectionist mayor in the remote village of Binuangan in Dupax del Norte town on Tuesday dawn, according to a report reaching the military here.

Col. Dacy Marinas, commanding officer of the Army's 54th Infantry Battalion, said the report indicated that Dupax del Norte Mayor Isaias Almuete and three men took the ballot boxes from three precincts at the Binuangan Elementary School at 1:30 a.m. Tuesday.

According to witnesses who asked not to be identified, Almuete, allegedly armed with a rifle and accompanied by three men, fired his gun before he entered the precincts and ordered his men to take the ballot boxes.

The group loaded these into Almuete's Mitsubishi L200 pickup then left.

When contacted for comment, Almuete denied the allegations. He said the charges were concocted by his political rivals.

But Almuete said he received reports that armed men took the ballot boxes from the precincts in Barangay Binuangan.

Members of Dupax del Norte's board of election inspectors said Almuete, a candidate of the Lakas-CMD, alighted from his vehicle and poked his gun at Sandy Wayan, a coordinator for the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino party in the area.

Reports said Almuete accused Wayan of taking a ballot box from a precinct in Sitio Diayan.

Senior Supt. Felix Caddali, provincial police director, on Tuesday asked the police's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group to conduct an independent inquiry amid the complainants' allegations of a cover up by the local police.

Tineg polls

The elections in Tineg town in Abra and the island town of Calayan in Cagayan pushed through on Monday following improved weather conditions.

Power outages were reported in Vigan City, Baguio City, Basco in Batanes and some parts of Pampanga on Monday night and Tuesday morning as the counting and canvassing of votes were ongoing.

In Pangasinan, three election officers in Urdaneta City were hurt when their tricycle was hit by a delivery van midnight of Monday.

Election officers Victoria Gandia, Jane Ave and Jessie Lapana were delivering a ballot box to the Comelec office in the city when the accident occurred.

In Bulacan, a passenger jeep loaded with food packs for the poll watchers and supporters of reelectionist Malolos City Mayor Danilo Domingo was burned by still unidentified suspects on Monday night.

In Abra, police officials in the province reported no outbreak of violence during the counting of votes.

Before the elections, the Abra police recorded several cases of election-related killings and harassment of supporters of rival political camps.

Col. Noel Mislang, commander of the Army's 41st Infantry Battalion and Senior Supt. Artemio Hicban, attributed the generally peaceful conduct of the elections in Abra to the vigilance of law enforcers.

Power outage

Power outages and a chaotic system partially hampered the ballot counting in Baguio City and some provinces of the Cordillera.

The Philippine Information Agency-Cordillera received reports that electricity in several Ifugao villages was cut off on Monday, although the electric cooperative there blamed the National Power Corp. for the power outages.

On Tuesday morning, power was cut off in downtown Baguio. The National Movement for Free Elections suspended the counting to await the restoration of power.

Police set up checkpoints around the ballot counting area at the Baguio Convention Center as a precaution against saboteurs and election fraud.

Tarlac tension

In Tarlac, tension rose in San Manuel town as the Comelec proclaimed reelectionist Mayor Reynaldo Malazo winner with 5,173 votes.

Malazo's rival, Benjamin Tesoro, and his supporters protested [illegible] victory by claiming massive cheating. Tesoro, who was arrested on Monday together with some supporters for possessing firearms, received [illegible],451 votes. Tesoro [illegible] able to post bail.

The Comelec also proclaimed Ricardo Adolfo as winner in the mayoral race with 4,750 votes.

In Pampanga, more than 1,000 supporters of mayoral candidate Oscar Tetangco massed up in front of the Apalit town hall to protest alleged election cheating.

The Namfrel in Apalit reported that at least 6,979 registered voters in the town were not able to vote because their names were not in the computerized voters list. At least 41,546 voters voted.

According to the Namfrel, the actual precincts were only 224

TENSION A18

Polls become big gamble in Mindanao

CANDIDATES and their supporters in Mindanao continued keeping watch over the results of their biggest gamble, running for elective posts, amid reports of cheating and as a group of financiers in Ozamiz City grabbed the chance to start a gambling racket over the election results.

But in some parts of the region, the wait for the results has increased tension.

In Tuburan, Basilan, followers of reelectionist Mayor Dore Kalahal snatched a ballot box and several sheets of official ballots at the Lower Sinangkapan Elementary School at 9:30 a.m.

The suspect, Hadja Fatma Sali, said she merely saved the election materials against armed men who were arriving at that time. The armed men were alleged followers of mayoral candidate Hadjirun Jamirin.

"I did not snatch or steal (the ballots). I just protected the ballot box and the ballots," Sali told the military and members of the Board of Election Inspectors.

The ballots were declared null and void.

In Siargao, Surigao del Norte, unidentified men fired at the house of village chief Oscar Jovero in Barangay Dapa early yesterday. Jovero is a supporter of reelectionist Mayor Alma Navarro.

No one was hurt.

Ray Sumalipao, election supervisor for Lanao del Sur, has recommended that failure of elections be declared in the towns of Lumba Bayabao, Kapatagan, Lumbatan and Sultan Dumalundong.

Sumalipao said he made the recommendation because of indiscriminate firing of guns, harass-

POLLS A19

Delayed polls, slow count in South Luzon

EVEN as the counting of the votes have ended in most precincts yesterday, thousands of voters in several Southern Luzon precincts were still casting their ballots.

Voters in Paete, Laguna went to their respective polling precincts at 7 a.m. yesterday to accomplish their postponed elections, which was marred by the delay in the arrival of about 3,000 ballots on Monday.

About 30 police and military men did not go to sleep to guard the ballots kept inside the municipal hall.

Volunteers of the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) and Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) and other poll watchers were in full force to safeguard the process.

As the counting moved on to tabulation of election results, Namfrel coordinators found out that their quick count was not so quick after all. Fr. Nelson Tria, Namfrel chair in Camarines Sur, said the tabulation of election results had been changed from just copying the results from precincts to tabulating them based on the official results provided by the Board of Election Inspectors (BEI).

He said the previous system of quick count was actually slower and error-prone because they had to make corrections several times on different copies of election returns, and even had to call Namfrel in Manila several times to amend what they had submitted.

He said they had to wait for the BEI to finish everything before they were given a copy of the official results that took them until midnight waiting in several instances.

At about noon yesterday, the Namfrel in Naga City had only received a fraction of the official election results from their volunteers in the 35 towns and two cities in Camarines Sur and it would take them about three days to finish the tabulation of the official election results for the local officials.

Aside from the dependence on the BEI for the tabulation, he said they also had to scrutinize the accuracy of the written results. He added they reviewed the tallies and more often found errors in the counting.

Tria said most errors occurred in the inconsistency of the sum of votes against the representation of votes tallied in fives. In cases like this, he said, they followed the tallies written in the official results.

He said the quick count using text messaging in relaying the results directly to Manila from the volunteers in the areas was very ideal but did not work on the ground because they have no funds for cell phones.

In Camarines Sur alone, the Namfrel has to tabulate election results from 5,117 precincts of which some 6,000 volunteers had been assigned.

In Virac, Catanduanes, Namfrel volunteers failed to systematically conduct their quick count due to some technical failure in the texting system, according to Catanduanes Namfrel provincial chair Rev. Fr. Laudemir Jose Gapaz.

As a result, he said, they just relied on the usual manual system and patiently waited for the most available data they could get from volunteers scattered across this island--province.

In Albay, where an eight-minute brownout was experienced Monday night, the canvassing was orderly, according to Fr. Jovic Lobrigo, Namfrel consul-

DELAYED A19

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Baguio mayor concedes defeat

BAGUIO CITY—Reelectionist Mayor Bernardo Vergara conceded on Tuesday to rival Councilor Braulio Yaranon, following an upset in early poll results here.

Vergara met Yaranon at a hotel here at 1 p.m. Wednesday to relay his decision to accept defeat.

As of 4 p.m. Wednesday, the National Movement for Free Elections tally showed that Yaranon got 2,732 votes while Vergara received 1,309. Namfrel had summed up the ballots of 45 out of 712 Baguio precincts. The city has 139,609 registered voters.

Both Vergara and Yaranon conducted a hostile campaign.

Vergara, a former Baguio representative running for his second term as mayor this year, said the public "misunderstood" all his good intentions because of that campaign. Vergara pleaded with residents to judge the merits of his leadership in the city.

Vergara, an engineer and former general manager of the Philippine Tourism Authority, had been criticized here for introducing massive infrastructure projects. Most of the campaign centered on these development projects.

He said he is hoping for a majority win in the city council for his Timpuyog ti Baguio partymates to ensure that many of his projects would be continued.

Among these projects is the P8-million vehicular flyover that would link Kennon Road and the Marcos Highway to downtown Baguio.

Yaranon, a former regional trial court judge, is 77 years old. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Counting tension starts

From page A17

and not 337 as the Comelec reported. Election results in 162 precincts had been tallied.

Not all those who served in the Board of Election Inspectors were teachers.

Brownouts also affected Mabalacat town on Monday night and in the City of San Fernando on Tuesday morning. The counting of votes took six to 10 hours to finish, local election officials said.

Reports from Gia Damaso-Dumo, Melvin Gascon, Ben Moses Ebreo, Estanislao Caldez, Juliet Cataluna, Artha Kira Paredes, Donna Demetillo, Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Desiree Caluza, Vincent Cabreza, Isobel Roldan and Elizabeth Aglugub, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Tonette Orejas, Carmela Reyes, Jo Clemente and Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Old photos reveal how Japanese built Baguio

By Vincent Cabreza
Baguio City

THE BAGUIO City covered with pine trees and the 8-degree Centigrade mornings live on the pages of a Japanese newsletter called "Pandesal."

It brings touching recollections of a city that was designed by Americans when their colonial government assumed the reins of administration over the islands from the Spaniards in the early 1900s.

"Pandesal" is also one of a few Japanese publications that knew of a Baguio that was built by Japanese carpenters, masons and traders, as portrayed in black-and-white photographs collected by its creator, Yokohama-based photographer Einosuke Rodolfo Furuya.

Furuya's collection of 400 vintage photographs is featured in a new coffee-table book, "Japanese Pioneers in the Northern Philippine Highlands," produced by Ibaloi scholars of Japanese descent.

The book pays homage to the Japanese artisans who were imported to help build the Benguet Road (now the Kennon Road), the first significant engineering effort to open the Cordillera mountains to Manila, in 1903. Many of the Japanese stayed and lived in the city until the end of World War II.

The book's editor, Patricia Okubo Afable, assistant director of natural history at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C., said many of the recollections that comprised "Japanese Pioneers" were stories that would never have been heard.

"Few societies in this world would pay homage to ... carpenters, masons, farmers, sawmill workers and traders. We never remember our own carpenter. We would probably remember our contractor, but never our carpenter," she said.

Beginnings

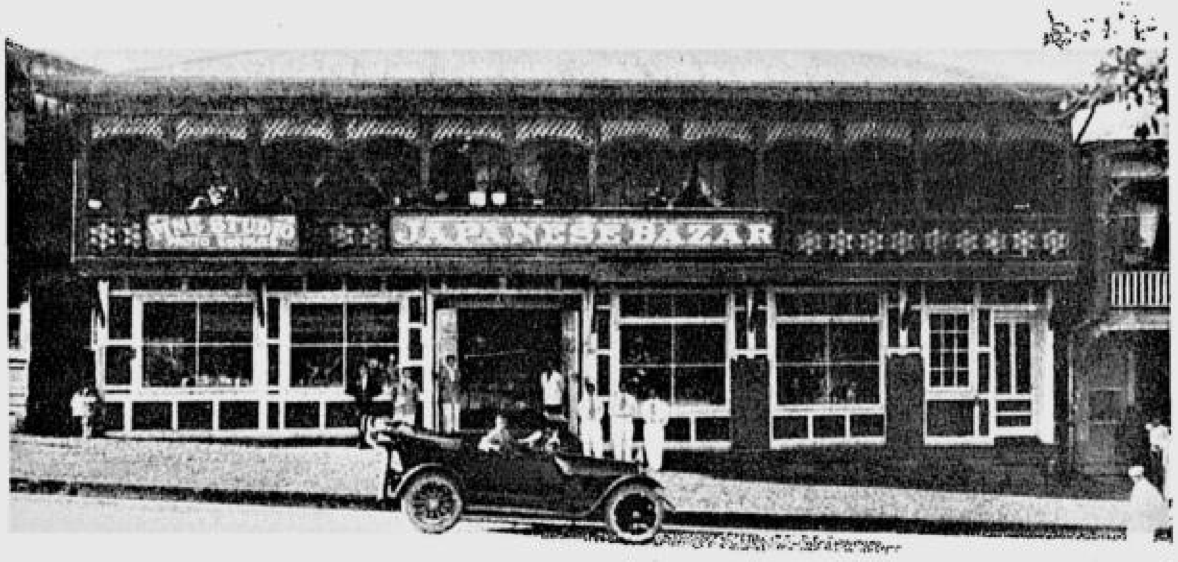
But these carpenters shared stories that trace "the very beginnings of Baguio and of the Cordillera."

Afable said many schools, bridges and houses in the towns of Cervantes (Ilocos Sur), Bontoc (Mt. Province) and Lubuagan (Kalinga) were built by Japanese workers who spread out to the Cordillera.

Furuya's father, Shonosuke, managed the Pines Studio, which survives today as a thriving "old Baguio" establishment, and collected about 100 prints of Japanese life on "foreign land."

"About 100 of these photographs were taken by my father, Shonosuke, and these include an image of my old home in Baguio. I was born in Notre Dame Hospital (in 1933). I am a Baguio boy," Einosuke Rodolfo Furuya said through an interpreter.

That 1920 photograph drew the attention of many old-timers because Furuya's home was one of several shops on Session Road, the main street in the central business district. It shows a section of the Pines Studio, which was alongside the Japanese Bazaar, described as one of the largest retailers of the bustling mining town.



THE JAPANESE Bazaar on Session Road, Baguio City, in the late 1910s, owned by Hideo Hayakawa. This photo was taken from the book, "Japanese Pioneers in the Northern Philippine Highlands: A Centennial Tribute (1903-2003)."

Beside the bazaar was the office of a newspaper called El Norte.

Some of the Furuya collections portray Japanese families in their Sunday best, in front of the Presidential Mansion.

Visible at the backdrop of one of the pictures is "the distinctive 1910 stoneware of Fukushima mason, Fukutura Sato," which is still a unique vista of today's mansion, the President's home in the summer capital.

A photograph reveals frolicking Japanese "poets" while waiting for the famous 1930s poet Koyo Daidoji present one of his pieces at the Empire Hotel.

Burnham Lake

Another Furuya photograph depicts a rather large Burnham Lake, minus the concrete embankments and railings. The photo features a Japanese woman viewing the lake.

"Japanese Pioneers" was launched on May 4, seven days after the 59th anniversary of Baguio's liberation from the Japanese Imperial Army, at the end of World War II.

Furuya said the Japanese residents were camped out in the forests of Benguet, when the Japanese forces set up headquarters at Camp John Hay.

War veterans have always suspected that the Japanese military saw more than just symbolic irony in settling their high command there.

Towards the end of the "unfortunate period of war" in 1945, Furuya said he and his neighborhood friends were sent back to Japan. But they brought along scented memories of the "*pandesal*" they always had for breakfast.

Many of his friends have since returned for a pilgrimage to Baguio, Furuya said. Many more allowed Furuya to store their family portraits, and a few of his childhood friends gave him their stories about the old Baguio that was more cosmopolitan than American.

Kennon Road

The Japanese were among a multitude of races brought by American engineers to build the Kennon Road.

Perhaps some of the poignant photographs are of "the zigzag" after 1903.

Road girders and Japanese workers were laid bare by Shonosuke Furuya and Shitchiburo Yamane, a carpenter who toiled on Kennon but who later embarked on a career as a commercial photographer in Sagada, Mt. Province.

Shonosuke had compiled the testimonies of his fellow Japanese migrants for a yearbook, which Furuya rediscovered at a collector's shop years later.

Kennon's construction was filled with scandal at its inception in 1903, prompting a United States congressional investigation of its financial excesses. It was briefly abandoned in 1906, but was eventually used as a major route to the city.

The government had been on the brink of abandoning the road again for its engineering flaws, which became apparent when the July 16, 1990 earthquake hit Baguio and caused damages.

Furuya said stories about the Kennon Road's abandonment agitated many of the Baguio-born Japanese. "I know (the road) has many dangers, and its walls always crumble, but I would cry if they completely abandon the road," he said.

"Too many Japanese bled, and sacrificed their own lands (back in Japan) to build that road." With a report from Desiree Caluza

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Delayed polls, slow count in Southern Luzon

From page A17

tant in Legazpi City.

In Calauan, Laguna, the canvassing of votes was suspended several times because of too much noise inside the canvassing area. Canvassing began only at 2 a.m. yesterday, and recessed from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 12 noon to 2 p.m., leading to a total number of 14 precincts canvassed out of 119 precincts as of 2 p.m. yesterday.

Fr. Renie Oliver, parish priest of San Isidro Labrador Parish and a Namfrel-Calauan volunteer, cited only two cases in which there were discrepancies in the tally and the actual number written in a statement of votes form.

In Los Baños, Laguna, Namfrel chair Paulita Canonizado observed that BEI members did not seem prepared enough for their duties. Town election officer Edgardo Marfil confirmed that the BEI "lacked training and knowledge." He said 60 of 249 precincts had already been counted as of press time.

Canonizado said they had only been able to count 16 percent of the election returns because of problems with the new system of counting, which included texting instead of e-mail and fax only.

In Banlic, Calamba City, many of those who were not able to vote because of lack of ballots staged a mini protest rally forcing the Comelec to suspend the elections briefly. The election, however, resumed after lunch when more ballots arrived.

The tension worsened when supporters of the rival of incumbent mayoral candidate Apollo Aguillar were caught by police illegally carrying firearms during election day.

TEACHERS rest on a staircase in Lucena City as they await their turn to man elections in the city.
DELFIN MALLARI/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON

Mabitac Police SPO2 Plata confirmed that four of the supporters of mayoral candidate Gerardo Pader were put in jail for violating the Omnibus Election Code.

Plata said the situation is now under control while the canvassing of votes at the town plaza was ongoing. He said police were in full alert to maintain peace and order and the successful conduct and completion of the elections. *Romulo Ponte, Juan Escandor Jr., Gil Francis Arevalo, Ronnie Lorejo and Clarice Colting, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Polls become big gamble in Mindanao...

From page A17

ment, intimidation of voters, lack of soldiers and scared election personnel in the towns.

Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani, commander of the 1st Marine Brigade Landing Team and head of Joint Task Force Ranao, said his soldiers also arrested a man who fired a .45 cal. pistol during the elections.

Two minors were also caught trying to vote but were later released.

Allegations of vote-buying and flying voters plagued the elections.

"Coaching" at some precincts was also reported.

However, the Lanao Sur elections were still considered peaceful despite tension in certain towns due to the intense rivalry between supporters of local mayoral candidates.

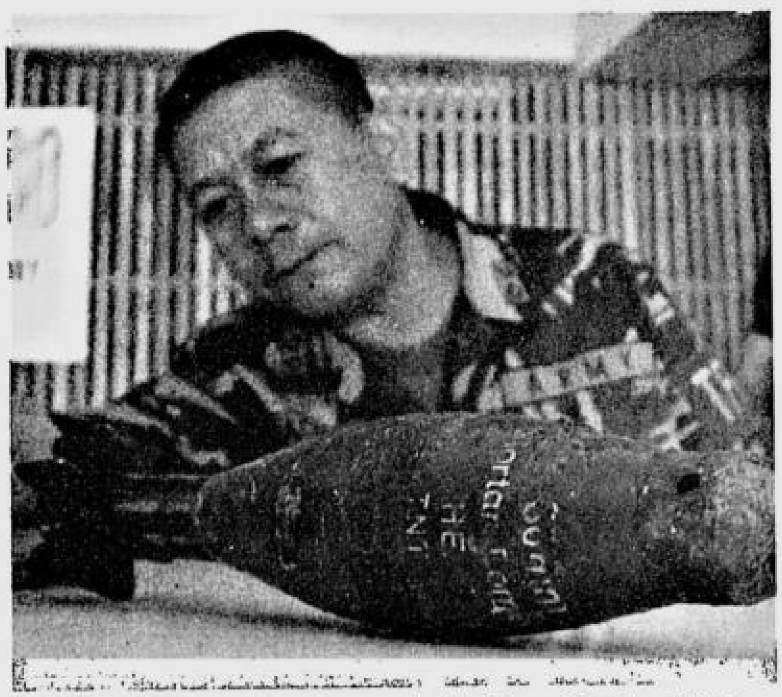
Lanao Sur is under Comelec control and 177 Marine soldiers have been sent there to serve as Board of Election Inspectors in 12 towns and Marawi City.

In Ozamiz City, once notorious as a base of the illegal gambling masiao, a lottery-type gambling emerged from the electoral exercise.

Gambling is generated by making a guess how many canditates from among three political groups would land seats in the city council.

There are three groups: local K4, Lakas-CMD, and one for independent candidates.

The local K4 group has seven candidates, all incumbents; Lakas-CMD has 10; and there are seven independent candidates.



A MORTAR shell found in a bus terminal in Davao City doesn't help any in easing the tension of the counting process. Showing reporters the mortar shell was Lt. Col. Glen Macasao. BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO

The number combination generated from each group must add up to 10, the total number of city council seats up for grabs.

The combination must abide by the following pattern: local K4 for "head," Lakas-CMD for "middle" and Independent for "tail."

In placing a bet, each combination costs a bettor P10. A bettor can place as much bet on one combination he wants to, the same way as a bettor can also bet on as many combinations as he wants.

Each bet represents a would-be share in the pot money generated by the totality of bets.

Winning bets are determined using official results of canvassing by the Commission on Elections (Comelec), which would take some three days.

Determining one's winnings will be on a winner-take-all basis, meaning, those who placed bets on the exact number combination will divide among themselves the pot money.

Of the pot money, 20 percent goes to the secretariat as administrative cost.

The division of pot money will be based on the amount of shares, that is, the total bets one placed for a certain number combination.

According to Mario Ferraren, a former three-term city councilor, he conceived of the numbers game as a means of "making fun" out of the "very hot" electoral contest.

Ferraren said the numbers game was primarily designed to raise funds for a relative who is running a campaign for an elective seat.

But when his friends learned about it, they got excited and wanted to join or start their own, he said.

Ferraren even made a one-page "tip" on which he outlined six probable combinations. The six, he said, are his intelligent guess of the turnout "regardless of presence or absence of electoral fraud."

The INQUIRER learned that betting closed mid-morning of May 11, just before the first round of Namfrel-tabulated results were read over radio.

The closing of bets was timed to prevent bettors from taking advantage of the latest rankings based on Namfrel figures.

Betting was observed to be brisk during the campaign homestretch, during which broadcast stations ran surveys on the prospects of candidates.

But betting peaked as soon as partial results from precincts went on-stream in radio stations.

Another gambling scheme on which betting is ongoing is on who will place 10th in the race for a city council seat.

In Baroy, Lanao del Norte, betting is also ongoing on who among three losing vice-mayoral candidates will get the most votes to place second to the leading contender.

These gambling schemes mirror how much Filipinos can make fun out of a direly serious socio-political matter as an election. *Ryan D. Rosauro, Rex Godinez Ortega, Julie S. Alipala and Franklin Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Pacificador takes lead over rivals in Antique elections...

From page A17

He also finished third in 2001 when he ran for governor against Salvacion Zaldivar-Perez and Damian Marfil.

The day after elections elsewhere in the Visayas was peaceful although charges of fraud and cheating were widespread.

In Roxas City, the head of the Freedom, Peace and Justice for Progress and Movement (FPJ-PM) for Western Visayas has filed charges against a village official for vote buying.

Joseph Arrojado, a lawyer, said he filed the case against Patroceno Besa, a kagawad of Barangay Inzo Arnaldo Village here, at the Commission on Election (Comelec) in Manila at about 3:30 p.m. yesterday.

Influence

He said he wanted to make sure that the case would not be influenced by local politicians, especially since Besa was an ally of Roxas City Mayor Antonio del Rosario.

Arrojado submitted a big brown envelope containing 18 small white envelopes that contained P150 cash each and a sample ballot of the administration candidates for the national and local levels.

Also attached in the complaint was a list of voters who allegedly received and were about to receive the supposed envelopes containing the money and the administration's sample ballot.

Besa denied the accusation and claimed that the lawyer was harassing him for political reasons.

Arrojado claimed that he saw Besa outside a voting precinct at the Inzo Arnaldo Village Elementary School, distributing white envelopes containing money and sample ballots of the administration candidates.

He said he had told Besa to stop, which the village official heeded. But later, he added he saw some voters holding envelopes containing P150 in cash and the administration sample ballots.

He said he asked one of the voters who told him that the envelopes came from Besa who was then inside a restaurant adjacent to the city police station and about 30 meters from the school.

Arrojado said he then rushed to the restaurant and saw Besa allegedly distributing white envelopes to some people.

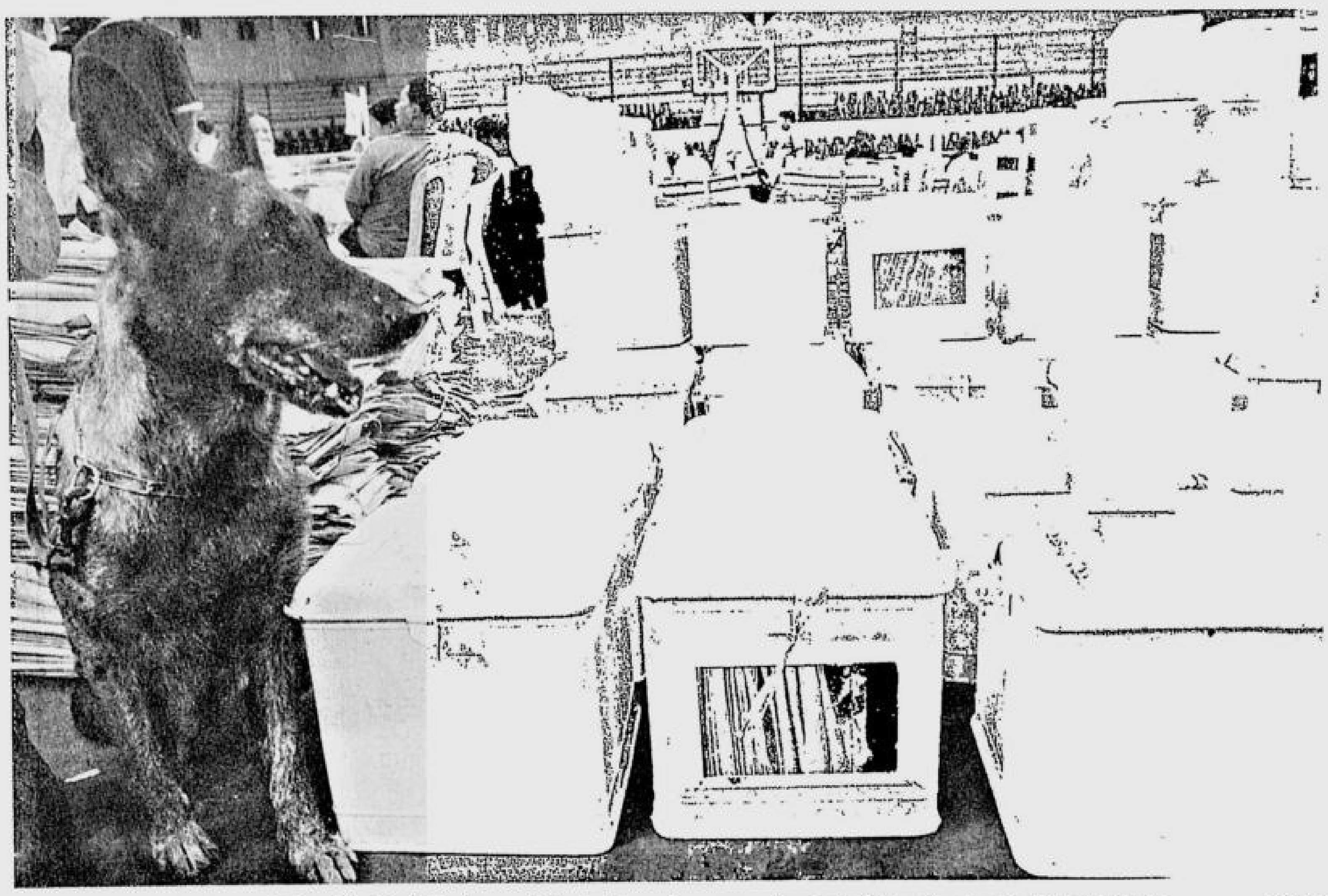
He pointed out that Chief Insp. Filomeno Bengan, Roxas police chief, was even inside the restaurant at that time.

In fact, he said, he even told Bengan "Chief, akon na lang sini maun-tat (Chief, can I stop this myself?)"

Besa only stopped when photographers, radio reporters and cameramen from the two cable companies in Capiz started to arrive, said Arrojado.

As Besa was about to leave, he tried to discreetly hand over a big brown envelope containing the smaller white envelopes and list of voters to a boy trailing him.

Since he was near Besa, Arrojado said he grabbed the brown envelope, which he said he would use as evidence against Besa. *With reports from Gerry T. Pagharion and Felipe Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau*



POLICE dog of the Western Police District K-9 unit guards ballot boxes for canvassing at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium in Manila.

ERIK ARAZAS

SWS exit poll says GMA defeating Poe by 9 points

From page A1

JOAN BONDOC

SLEEPLESS at the Quezon City Hall while waiting for election returns, a Comelec representative tries to catnap.

Namfrel's partial and unofficial tally covered 439 precincts, representing 0.2 percent of the 216,382 total precincts nationwide.

Ms Macapagal was also ahead in the quick count that AMA Education System conducted for "Eleksyon 2004," the coverage of the elections by GMA 7, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inq7.net, PLDT, Smart, Cahtolic Media Network, dzBB, New Media Inc. and PCIJ.

As of 5:53 p.m. yesterday, the last count by AMA Education System, Ms Macapagal had 553,388 votes; Poe, 540,118, Lacson, 248,425; Roco, 145,829; and, Villanueva, 129,091.

Johnny Ramos, vice president of AMA, said AMA came up with the last tally yesterday "to give way to the official count of the Comelec." Ramos said the quick count covered 13,698 precincts and a total of 1,616,851 votes.

In the SWS exit poll, Ms Macapagal pulled away from her rivals in the Visayas and Mindanao, where he got 62 percent and 50 percent of the votes, respectively.

Poe had 21 percent of the votes in the Visayas and 35 percent in Mindanao. The actor beat Ms Macapagal in Luzon outside Metro Manila. Poe had 38 percent while Ms Macapagal had 24 percent in Southern Luzon. In North and Central Luzon, Poe got 41 percent compared with the President's 32 percent.

In Metro Manila, the President was also ahead of her rivals, getting 31 percent of the votes, followed by Poe with 23 percent. Lacson got 20 percent; Villanueva, 10 percent; and, Roco, 8 percent.

Victory would give Ms Macapagal her first real mandate to lead the country after three years of only partly successful efforts to tackle corruption, insurgencies, huge debts, pervasive poverty and a weak economy.

The President, a US-trained economist, had the support of big business, charismatic Christian groups and much of the political elite as she campaigned largely on her track record and Poe's inexperience.

The peso and Manila stocks opened sharply lower, although that was partly a reaction to a global market slide on Monday. *(Related story on Page B1.)*

Election officials yesterday said that voters' turnout on Monday was about 72 to 80 percent, lower than previous turnouts in presidential elections which reached 85 percent.

Commissioner Resurreccion Borra said the figure was a conservative estimate based on talks with election officers.

Commissioner Manuel Barcelona told television reporters that 76 percent of the voters cast their votes in Region 10.

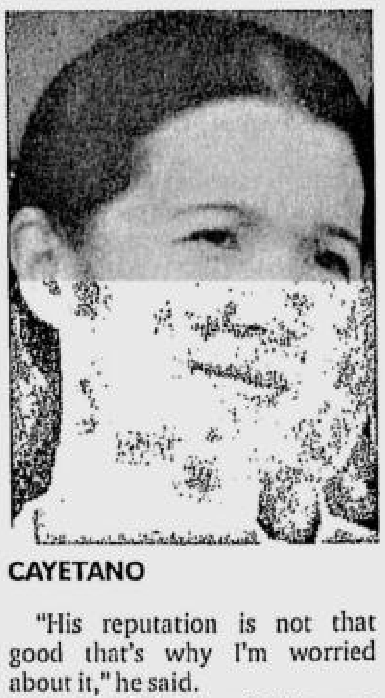
He said the turnout was 65 to 75 percent in the two Zamboanga provinces, 65 to 70 percent in Basilan, 75 percent in Sulu and Tawi-Tawi, 78 to 80 percent in Butuan, and 80 to 85 percent in Agusan del Sur. Surigao del Norte had a voter turnout of 80 percent while Surigao del Sur had 86 percent turnout, according to Barcelona. ***With reports from Cynthia D. Balana, Martin P. Marfil and Reuters***

8 K-4, 4 KNP bets lead in Senate race

From page A1

ROXAS

REVILLA



CAYETANO

Nagkakaisang Pilipino who made it were re-electionist senator Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Jamby Madrigal and Jinggoy Estrada, the son of jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada.

Within striking distance of the top 12 were K-4 reelectionist senator John Osmeña and Alfredo Lim of the opposition.

The poll of 4,627 voters across the country from an estimated voter turnout of 81.5 percent had a margin of error of 1.5 percent.

The standings of the leading candidates in the SWS poll were as follows: Roxas, 49 percent; Revilla, 45 percent; Cayetano, Pimentel and Madrigal tied at 33 percent; Santiago, 31 percent; Estrada, Gordon and Lapid tied at 30 percent; Barbers, 28 percent; and Enrile and Biazon tied at 27 percent.

Partial and unofficial quick counts of the National Movement for Free Elections, the GMA 7-AMA Computer University quick count, and ABS-CBN-STI quick count showed Roxas maintaining a comfortable lead over other candidates from the K-4 coalition.

As of 5.53 p.m. yesterday, the standings in the "Eleksyon 2004" of the GMA 7-AMA quick count were as follows: Roxas, 1.01 million; Gordon, 831,599; Cayetano, 764,203; Pimentel, 758,959; and Enrile, 739,656.

Completing the "magic 12" were Lim, Madrigal, Revilla, Biazon, Santiago, Maceda and Lapid.

Among the opposition candidates, the results were surprising for Madrigal, who lost when she ran for senator in 2001, and the young Estrada who is a co-accused of his father on plunder charges and is only out on bail.

The oldtimers, Pimentel and Enrile, were consistent in placing among the leading 12 in the SWS exit poll and the other quick count operations.

In an interview, Pimentel said it was still anybody's game as far as the national elections were concerned.

"I still worry about fraudulent operations being launched by the Comelec against us. I was told, but have yet to confirm it, that Comelec commissioner Virgilio Garcillano who is supposed to have been assigned to Southern Luzon is said to be operating in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. And that to my mind is an ominous development," said Pimentel.

He said that Garcillano was "reputed to have been instrumental" in the *dagdag-bawas* (vote-padding and shaving) in the 1998 and previous elections.

"His reputation is not that good that's why I'm worried about it," he said.

Pimentel said that if KNP presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. would win by a large margin, the ratio in the Senate race would be 8-4, in favor of the KNP.

"The worst case is 6-6," said Pimentel who named Madrigal, Lim, Estrada, Enrile, Maceda and Tatad as the opposition's strongest candidates.

"We are still highly expectant of victory. And I'm very enthused over the results of the South African overseas workers' vote, because there were 12 who voted, and I got 11," he quipped.

ELEKSYON 2004

CORDILLERA ADMINISTRATIVE REGION (CAR)	
ABRA	
Namfrel as of 3 pm, 05/11/04	
Governor	
Valera, Vicente P.	18,735
Luna, Roger B.	5,786
Congressman	
Namfrel as of 3 pm, 05/11/04	
Aquino, Carlos B.	519
Bersamin, Luis, Jr. P.	21,460
BENGUET	
Congressman (Lone District of Baguio City)	
Namfrel as of 3 pm, 05/11/04	
Domogan, Mauricio G.	3,488
Tayengco, Thomas S.	161
Zamora, Imelda R.	88
Goyenechea, Luis S.	65
BAGUIO CITY	
Namfrel as of 1:34 pm 05/11/04	
Mayor	
Yaranon, Braulio D.	1,994
Vergara, Bernardo M.	991
Avila, Edgar M.	585
Cariño, Richard A.	426
Ramos, Felipe T.	9
REGION 1	
ILOCOS NORTE	
PPCRV/Namfrel as of 12 pm 05/11/04	
Governor	
Marcos, Ferdinand, Jr. R.	30,932
Congressman (District 1)	
PPCRV/Namfrel as of 12 pm 05/11/04	
Ablan, Roque, Jr. R.	16,456
Sales, Reynolan	12,247
Congressman (District 2)	
Imee R. Marcos	2,210
LAOAG CITY	
Mayor	
Fariñas, Michael V.	1,611
Domingo, Edward P.	1,432
ILOCOS SUR	
Count from Singson Camp as of 3 pm, 05/11/04	
Governor	
Singson, Luis C.	80,206
Rafanan, Efren A.	50,118
Congressman (District 1)	
Baterina, Salacnib F.	66,884
Tajon, Mariano M.	34,617
Congressman (District 2)	
Antolin, Ernesto N.	740
Singson, Eric D.	16,622
LA UNION	
Namfrel as of 11am, 05/11/04	
Governor	
Ortega, Victor francisco C.	14,654
Dumpit, Thomas, Jr. DL.	3,789
Congressman (District 1)	
Ortega, Manuel C.	15,952
Dumpit, Erwin A.	2,507
Congressman (District 2)	
Dumpit, Tomas M.	2,208
Bacumay, Henry, Jr A	1,239
SAN FERNANDO CITY	
Mayor	
Ortega, Mary Jane C.	16,058
Flores, Godofredo A.	2,079
PANGASINAN	
AMA as of 4 44pm, 05/11/04	
Governor	
Agbayani, Victor Aguedo E.	32966
Goco, Marietta P.	3215
CAGAYAN	
Namfrel as of 05/11/04	
Governor	
Delos Santos, Joven P.	241
Lara, Edgar R.	69,608
Fausto, Leonides N.	15,196
Perez, Jose A.	390
Congressman (District 1)	
Ponce Enrile, Juan, Jr. C.	12,069
Padilla, Victor I	7,856
Congressman (District 2)	
Layus, Celia T	13,403
Vargas, Florencio L.	13,015
Ramos, Lazaro U.	911
Salvatera, Norma D.	334
Congressman (District 3)	
Mamba, Manuel N.	19,264
Ting, Delfin T.	16,938
TUGUEGARAO CITY	
Mayor	
Ting, Randolph S.	6,027
Collado Lucio S	756
ISABELA	
Namfrel as of 05/11/04	
Governor	
Padaca, Maria Gracia M.	64,578
Dy, Faustino, Jr. S	62,456
Congressman (District 1)	
Albano, Rodolfo III T	22,654
Marallag, Francisco V.	9,698
Congressman (District 2)	
Uy, Edwin C	20 486
Calderon, Benito R.	14,983
Congressman (District 3)	
Dy, Faustino III DG.	19,987
Chan, Carlos	9,558
Congressman (District 4)	
Aggabao Giorgidi B	7,278
Miranda, Anthony C	7,128
CAUAYAN CITY	
Namfrel as of 05/11/04	
Mayor	
Dy, Cesar DG.	12,652
Felipe, Marianito, Jr.	4,643
SANTIAGO CITY	
Namfrel as of 05/11/04	
Mayor	
Navarro, Amelita S.	10,471
Miranda, Jose C	8,315
NUEVA VIZCAYA	
Namfrel as of 05/11/04	
Governor	
Cuaresma, Luisa L.	1,750
Perez, Leonardo Byron R.	1,049
Salun-at, Ernesto S	335
Congressman	
Agbayani, Rodolfo Q.	1,202
Lantion, Thompson C.	938
Padilla, Ruth R.	918
REGION 3	
BATAAN	
Namfrel as of 05/11/04	
Governor	
Garcia, Enrique Jr. T.	7,221
Roque, Rogelio G.	6,193
Congressman (District 1)	
Roman, Antonino P	3,171
Ferrer, Gaudencio C.	2,670
Congressman (District 2)	
Roman, Leonardo B.	6,063
Garcia, Albert S	4,674
NUEVA ECIJA	
Namfrel as of 05/11/04	
Governor	
Joson, Tomas III N.	2,819
Villareal, Julita L.	2,307
PAMPANGA	
Namfrel as of 05/11/04	
Governor	
Bundoc, Juan Pablo P.	16,650
Ducut, Zenaida C	14,670
Lapid, Mark T	8,240
Congressman (District 2)	
Arroyo, Juan Miguel M	27,236
Congressman (District 3)	
Aquino, Reynaldo B	4,749
Congressman (District 4)	
Bondoc, Anna York P	1,410
Mayor (Angeles City)	
AMA as of 4 44pm, 05/11/04	
Lazatin, Carmelo F	10918
Nepomuceno, Robin L	8651
Mayor (San Fernando City)	
AMA as of 4 44pm, 05/11/04	
Lagman, Eligio H	6398
Rodriguez, Oscar S.	5654
Domingo, Andrea D.	4573
Henson, Rosve V.	1469
TARLAC	
Namfrel as of 05/11/04	
Governor	
Yap, Jose Villa A.	6,385
Apostol, Isaias M.	1,522
Congressman (District 1)	
Teodoro, Gilberto Jr. C.	6,174
ZAMBALES	
Namfrel as of 05/11/04	
Governor	
Montalla, Cheryl D	16,287
Magsaysay, Vicente P.	15,780
Perez, Ferdinand A.	85
Congressman (District 1)	
Magsaysay, Maria H.	17,631
Gordon, Katherine H.	14,162
Dela Llana, Loretta P.	221
Owen, Teodora L.	86
Congressman (District 2)	
Diaz, Antonio M.	12,875
Mendaros, Edwin DV.	9,241
Torres, Ruben D.	7,664
Mayor (Olongapo City)	
Gordon, James J.	26,438
Malabute, Giderbert P.	5,474
REGION 4A	
BATANGAS	
AMA as of 4:44 pm, 05/11/04	
Governor	
Perez, Hernando B.	103655
Sanchez, Armando C.	57659
Apacible, Rosario M.	31945
Hernandez, Nicomedes F.	3836
Mandanas, Marcos Jr. M.	2534
Atienza, Arturo A.	764
Mayor (Lipa City)	
AMA as of 4 44pm, 05/11/04	
Recto, Rosa Vilma S.	7785
Umali, Ruben L.	3304
Mantuano, Melecio Jr. L.	844
Panganiban, Mario L.	745
CAVITE	
AMA as of 4:44 pm, 05/11/04	
Governor	
Maliksi, Erineo S.	34838
Velasco, Epimaco A.	11176
Uy, Virginia P.	346
LAGUNA	
AMA as of 4:44pm, 05/11/04	
Governor	
Fernandez, Danilo Ramon S.	49580
San Luis, Rodolfo S	46782
Lazaro, Teresita S.	42362
RIZAL	
Mayor (Antipolo City)	
AMA as of 4 44 pm, 05/11/04	
Say, Susana G.	18889
Gatlabayan, Angelito C.	14159
Bulanon, Silverio G.	705
REGION 4B	
PALAWAN	
AMA as of 4 44pm, 05/11/04	
Mayor (Puerto Princesa City)	
Hagedorn, Edward S.	1056
Socrates, Dennis M.	676
Inego, Aladin D.	57
Lazo, Santiago L.	0
REGION 5	
CAMARINES SUR	
Mayor (Naga City)	
AMA as of 4 44pm, 05/11/04	
Robredo, Jesse M.	21018
Villafuerte, Jojo L.	8469
Lim, Ivy V	223
REGION 6	
ANTIQUE	
Namfrel as of 11:30am, 5/11/04	
46 of 1249 precincts (3.68%)	
Governor	
Perez, Salvacion Z.	3,722
Operiano, Roberto Q.	2,629
Congressman	
Javier, Exequiel B.	2,821
Plameras, Jovito, Jr. C.	3,085
Mallares, Narzal B.	361
CAPIZ	
Namfrel as of 12noon, 5/11/04	
two towns	
Governor	
Amoroso, Zenon E.	136
Bermejo, Vicente B.	9,162
Congressman (District 1)	
Dadivas, Rodriguez D	6822
Borda, Jose E	2682
Altavas, Rey Antonio Jose S.	362
Mayor (Roxas City)	
Del Rosario, Antonio A.	8,032
Belo, Matilde S.	3,085
ILOILO	
AMA as of 4:44pm, 5/11/04	
Governor	
Garin, Oscar G.	2
Gil, Norbert P.	2
Tupas, Niel, Sr. D.	2
Mayor (Iloilo City)	
AMA as of 4 44pm, 5/11/04	
Ang, Vicente P.	469
Treñas, Jerry P.	64.526
Facultad, Victor V.	9.518
Sarabia, Ma. Rita B	3.427
NEGROS OCCIDENTAL	
Congressman (Lone District of Bacolod City)	
Namfrel as of 1 30pm 5-11-04	
80 of 1281 precincts	
Puentevella, Monico D.	3.631
Orola, Juan, Jr. N	2.459
Baribar, Archie S.	897
Amadora, Jose Maria G.	6
Mayor (Bacolod City)	
Namfrel as of 1 30pm, 5/11/04	
80 of 1281 precincts	
Flor, Celia Matea R.	540
Leonardia, Evelio R.	3,280
Valdez, Luzviminda S.	2,884
San Joaquin, Benito D.	8
Durino, Julio G.	7
REGION 7	
BOHOL	
Namfrel as of 3pm, 5/11/04	
100 of 188 precincts in Tagbilaran City	
Governor	
Relampagos, Rene L.	8,483
Aumentado, Erico B	7,399
Peligrino, Peter B.	40
Congressman (District 1)	
Castillo, Natalio Jr R	163
Chatto, Edgardo M	13,167
Mayor (Tagbilaran City)	
Namfrel as of 3pm, 5/11/04	
100 of 188 precincts	
Lim, Dan N	6,793
Torralba, Alberta C	5 594
Cabalit, Jorge D.	4,276
Monton, Nemesio C.	12
Piezarras, Salvador S.	12
CEBU	
Namfrel as of 11:30am, 5/11/04	
545 of 13,060 precincts	
Governor	
Cezar, Rafael, Jr A.	28
Garcia, Gwendolyn F.	4,188
Martinez, Celestino, Jr. E.	2,694
Osmeña, John Henry U.	898
Tuadles, Welfredo B.	30
	0
Congressman (District 1)	
Namfrel as of 11 31am, 5/11/04	
21 of 1682 precincts	
Bolongaita, Alex A.	21
Gullas, Eduardo R.	1,721
Rama, Enrique P	004
Loreda, Jose Mari C	60
Congressman (District 5)	
Namfrel as of 11 31am, 5/11/04	
3 of 1708 precincts	
Durano, Joseph Felix Mari H.	151
Dira, Rosemarie D	58
Congressman (District 6)	
Namfrel as of 11 31am, 5/11/04	
48 of 2314 precincts	
Ruiz, Norissa S.	2,910
Quano, Jovita Tuola Z.	2,403
Biaño, Victor C.	74
Congressman (Cebu City, District 1)	
Namfrel-Ccimpel as of 11:32am, 5/11/04	
160 of 1139 precincts	
Del Mar, Raul V.	12,712
Fernan, Danilo M.	1,091
Arenasa, Juan U.	297
Villarin, Florencio O.	237
Fernan, Russo C.	56
Congressman (Cebu City, District 2)	
Namfrel-Ccimpel as of 11 32am, 5/11/04	
317 of 1535 precincts	
Cuenco, Antonio V.	13,507
Batuhan, Aristotle B.	12,032
Ong, Manuel F.	7
Mayor (Cebu City)	
Namfrel as of 11 29am, 5/11/04	
477 of 2674 precincts	
Burlas, Ananias T.	141
Osmeña, Tomas R.	23 581
Garcia, Alvin B	18,461
NEGROS ORIENTAL	
Namfrel as of 9am, 5/11/04	
64 precincts	
Governor	
Arnaiz, George P.	10,201
Tayhon, Lorenzo R.	228
Congressman (District 2)	
Namfrel as of 9am, 5/11/04	
64 precincts	
Anñon, Raul S.	32
Macias, Emilio II C.	5,472
Remollo, Orlando V.	1,486
Torres, Samuel B.	46
Congressman (District 3)	
Namfrel as of 9am, 5/11/04	
67 precincts in two towns	
Teves, Edgar Y.	6,288
Teves, Herminio G.	6,022
Mayor (Dumaguete City)	
Namfrel as of 9am, 5/11/04	
64 precincts	
Perdices, Agustin R.	4,680
Maquiling, Woodrow, Sr. S.	2,590
Remollo, Antonio J.	424
SIQUIJOR	
Namfrel as of 6am, 5/11/04	
Governor	
Villa, Dean S.	973
Fua, Orlando B.	957
Chan, Arthur M.	54
Congressman	
Fua, Orlando, Jr. A.	1,080
Olpoc, Epifanio, Jr. S.	940
Chan, Joy Dominic U.	9
Flor, Jesus J.	2
REGION 8	
EASTERN SAMAR	
Namfrel as of 3 30pm, 5/11/04	
58 of 1567 precincts	
Governor	
Ambil, Ruperto, Jr. A.	2,858
Evardone, Ben P.	7,107
Salazar, Clotilde J.	3,402
Castillo, Jose P.	114
Congressman	
Libanan, Marcelino C.	7,153
Ramirez, Jose T.	3,977
Montes, Roy S.	1,605
LEYTE	
Namfrel as of 12:10am, 5/11/04	
140 of 4431 precincts	
Governor	
Apostol, Sergio Antonio F.	7,490
Petilla, Carlos Jericho L.	6612
Sotto, Roberto C	130
Pagayanan, Hermela P.	109
Larrazabal, Adolfo E	41
Congressman (District 1)	
Namfrel as of 12 10pm, 5/11/04	
140 of 912 precincts	
Petilla, Remedios L.	9,204
Avila, Charlie	3,187
Congressman (District 2)	
Namfrel as of 12 10 pm, 5/11/04	
140 of 990 precincts	
Apostol, Trinidad G.	436
Villasin, Nestor P.	381
Horca, Manuel, Jr. L	19
Mayor (Tacloban City)	
Namfrel as of 12 10pm, 5/11/04	
130 of 457 precincts	
Romualdez, Alfredo T.	12,620
Chan, Wilson L.	2,328
Sipaco, Renato O.	265
Abrenatea, Nestor L.	134
Chan, Edmund T	50
NORTHERN SAMAR	
Namfrel as of 10 42am, 5/11/04	
108 of 1792 precincts	
Governor	
Balanquit, Sixto, Jr. T.	1,307
Daza, Raul A.	12,465
Morales, Teddy L	143
Cabacang, Serafin, Jr. C.	69
Congressman (District 1)	
Abayon, Harlin C	11,550
Ong, Nelson L.	214
Tagle, Pedrito D	203
SOUTHERN LEYTE	
Governor	
Namfrel as of 12noon, 5/11/04	
12 precincts	
Lerias, Rosette Y.	7,044
Saludo, Ma. Salvacion D.	3,636
Congressman	
Geraldo, Vicente A.	44
Mercado, Roger G.	7,178
Saludo, Aniceto, Jr. G.	3,897
Mayor (Maasin City)	
Mercado, Damian G	3,215
Yusingco, Helen Fernandez	380
REGION 9	
ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR	
Mayor (Zamboanga City)	
AMA as of 4 44pm, 5/11-04	
Lobregat, Celso L.	13,383
Wee, Dee Ping L.	5,898
Mariano, Charlie M	5,807
Guardian, Alejandro G.	450
Angkaya, Abdusalam P	73
REGION 10	
MISAMIS ORIENTAL	
AMA as of 4 44pm, 5/11/04	
Mayor (Cagayan de Oro City)	
Emano, Vicente Y	16 247
Tamondong, Eddie U	1,493
Lagnimas, Leodegario A.	541
Daleon, Jose Jr N	322
Borres, Felix Jr. F	205
Baygan, Herminigilda V	40
Cabegun, Alfredo C	
REGION 11	
DAVAO DEL SUR	
AMA as of 4 44pm, 5/11/04	
Mayor (Davao City)	
Duterte, Rodrigo R	17,962
De Guzman, Benjamin C.	8,803
Salera, Henry S	64
Pablico, Rudy C	8
Marcelones, Magdaleno Jr.	6
REGION 12	
NORTH COTABATO	
AMA as of 4 44pm, 5/11/04	
Governor	
Piñol, Emmanuel F	4
SOUTH COTABATO	
Mayor (General Santos City)	
AMA as of 4 44pm, 5.11.04	
Acharon, Pedro, Jr. B	18,662
Garay, Teodulo F	7,237
Rivera, Ryan C.	204
Mayor (Cotabato City)	
AMA as of 4 44pm, 5/11/04	
Abenon, Nicasio L	144
Sema, Muslimin G	8,154
Juliano, Estrellita T	6 734

Compiled by PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, PDI Visayas Bureau, PDI Mindanao Bureau, PDI Research, and PDI volunteers Erika Sarmiento, Jihan Jaafar and Rissa Camongol

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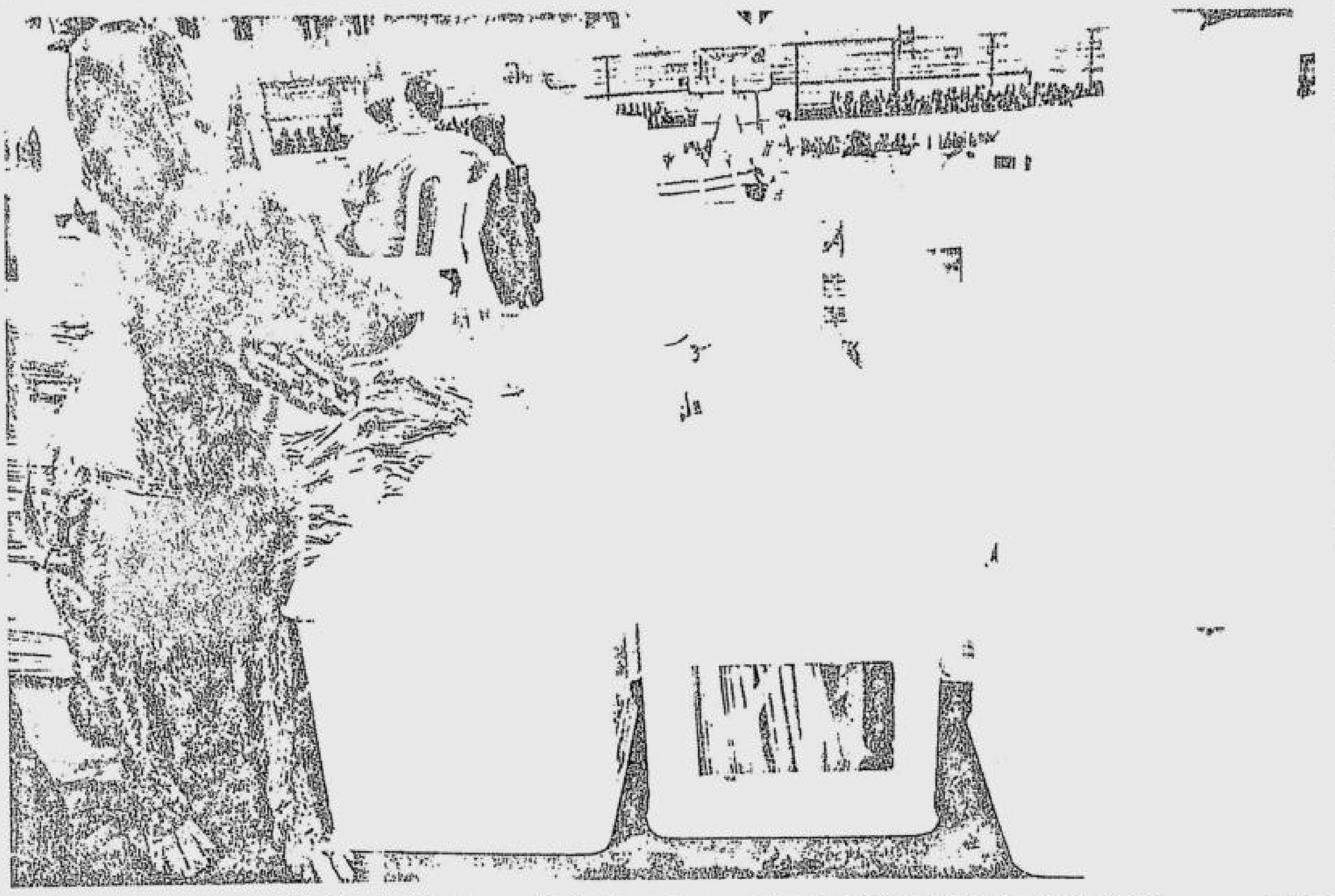


POLICE dog of the Western Police District K-9 unit guards ballot boxes for canvassing at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium in Manila. ERIK ARAZAS

SWS exit poll says GMA defeating Poe by 9 points

page A1

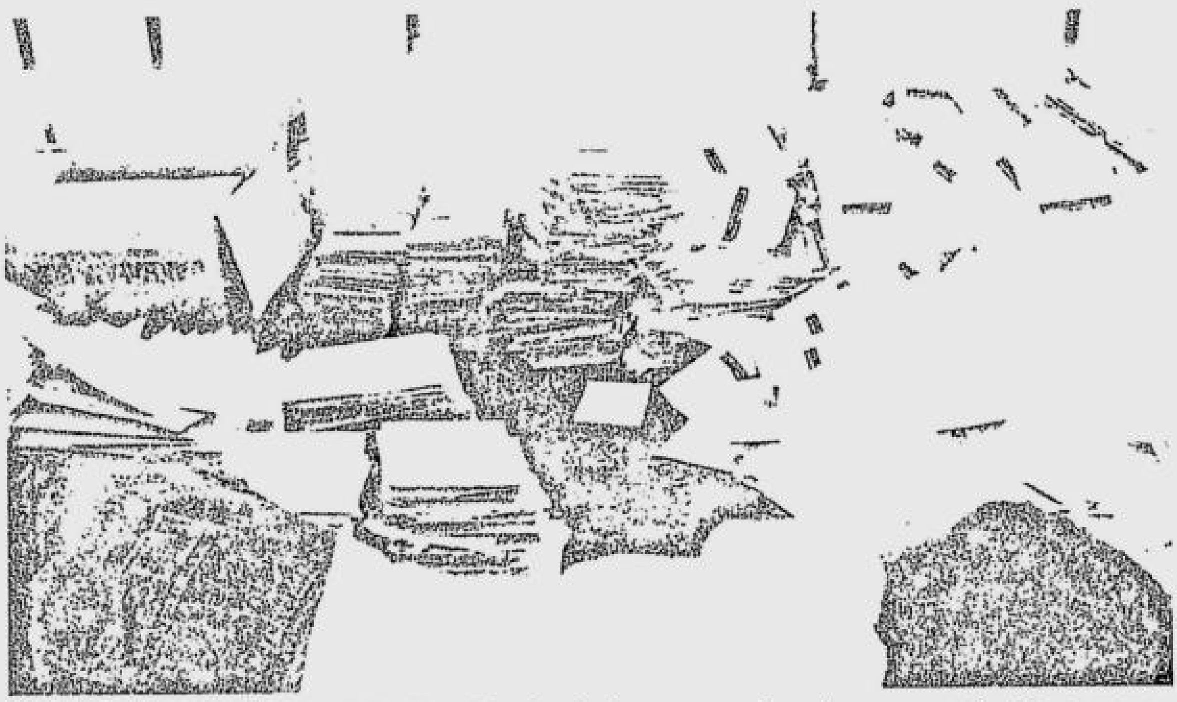
Namfrel's partial and unofficial lly covered 439 precincts, repre nting 0.2 percent of the 216,382 total precincts nationwide.

Ms Macapagal was also ahead the quick count that AMA Edu ation System conducted for ksyon 2004," the coverage of elections by GMA 7, Philip pine Daily Inquirer, Inq7.net, PLDT, Smart, Cahtolic Media Net 4zBB, New Media Inc. and

s f 5:53 p.m. yesterday, the count by AMA Education Sys Ms Macapagal had 553,388 Poe, 540,118, Lacson 425, Roco, 145,829 nd, nueva, 129,091.

Johnny Ramos, vice president AMA, said AMA came up with tally yesterday to give he offic the Ramo

12 preci of .616. 1 vote SW p Ms Mac om he va Mindanao go 02 pe ent and 50 votes espectively. 1 percent of the votes is and en in anao. The actor beat Ms apagal in Luzon outside Manila. Poe had 3 percent Ms Macapagal had 24 pe Southern Luzon. In North Central Luzon, Poe got 41 t compared with he Pre percent



SLEEPLESS at the Quezon City Hall while waiting for election returns, a Comelec representative tries to catnap.

In Metro Manila, the President was also ahead of her rivals, getting 31 percent of the votes, followed by Poe with 23 percent. Lacson got 20 percent; Villanueva, 10 percent and, Roco, 8 percent.

Victory would give Ms Macapagal her first real mandate to lead untry after three years of partly successful efforts to ackle corruption, insurgencies, huge debts pervasive poverty and a weak

The ent, US-trained d th pport of big an politica elite as she campaigned largely on her track record and Po experience.

The peso and Manila stocks opened sharply lower, although that was partly a reaction global market slide on Monday *(Related story on Page B1.)*

Election officials yesterday said that voters' turnout on Monday was about 72 to 80 percent, lower than previous turnouts in presidential elections, which reached 85 perc

Commissione Re Borra said wa servative sed with election offic

Commissioner Manuel Barcelona told television reporters that 70 percent of the voters cast their votes in Region 10.

He said the turnout was 65 to 75 percent the two Zamboanga provinces) percent in Basilan, percent Sulu and Tawi-Tawi) percent in Butuan, and percent Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Norte and a voter turnout of 80 percent while Surigao del Sur had 80 percent turnout according to Barcelona. *With reports from Cynthia D. Balana, Martin P. Marfil and Reuters*

3 K-4, 4 KNP bets lead in Senate race

Pili ot ato Pin amby

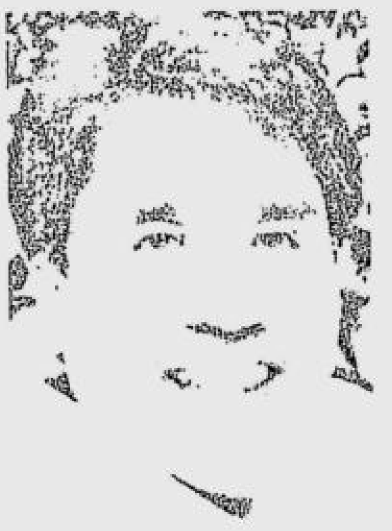
4

PI

SWS Ro percent nd Ma percent. Lapid tied at Ba percent, nd Bia 27

and unofficial quick count of the National Movement for Free Elections, the GMA 7-AMA Computer University quick count, and ABS-CBN-STI quick count showed Roxas maintaining comfortable lead over other candidates from the K-4 coalition.

p.m. yesterday, the standings in the "Eleksyon 2004" of the GMA 7-AMA quick count follows: Roxas, 1.01 mil



ROXAS

REVILLA

CAYETANO

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He said that Garcillano was "reputed to have been instrumental" in the *dagdag-bawas* (vote padding and shaving) in the 1998

"His reputation is not that good that's why I'm worried about it," said

Pimentel said that if KNP presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. would win by a large margin, the ratio in the Senate race would be 8-4, in favor of the KNP.

"The worst case is 6-6," said Pimentel who named Madrigal, Lim, Estrada, Enrile, Maceda and Tatad as the opposition's strongest candidates.

"We are still highly expectant of victory. And I'm very enthused over the results of the South African overseas workers' vote, because there were 12 who voted,

ELEKSYON 2004

CORDILLERA ADMINISTRATIVE REGION (CAR)

ABRA

Governor
Valera, Vicente
B

Congressman
Aquino 319
1,460

BENGUET

Congressman
(Lone District of Baguio City)
Thomas 161
Imelda P 88

BAGUIO CITY

Mayor
Yaranon, Braulio D 1,994
Vergara, Bernardo M 991
Avila, Edgar M 505
Cariño, Richard 420

REGION 1

ILOCOS NORTE

Governor

Congressman (District 1)
Ablan, Roque 16,456

Congressman (District 2)

LAOAG CITY

Mayor
1,611
Edward 1,437

ILOCOS SUR

Governor
1,266
111

Congressman (District 1)
66,364
14,6

Congressman (District 2)

LA UNION

Governor
14,654

Congressman (District 1)

Congressman (District 2)

SAN FERNANDO CITY

Mayor

PANGASINAN

Governor

CAGAYAN

Governor

Congressman (District 1)

Congressman (District 2)

Congressman (District 3)

TUGUEGARAO CITY

Mayor

ISABELA

Governor

Congressman (District 1)

Congressman (District 2)

Congressman (District 3)

Congressman (District 4)

CAUAYAN CITY

Mayor

SANTIAGO CITY

Mayor

NUEVA VIZCAYA

Governor

Congressman

REGION 3

BATAAN

Governor

Congressman (District 1)

Congressman (District 2)

NUEVA ECIJA

Governor

PAMPANGA

Governor

Congressman (District 2)

Congressman (District 3)

Congressman (District 4)

Mayor (Angeles City)
Lazat
Rod

Mayor (San Fernando City)

TARLAC

Governor

Congressman (District 1)

ZAMBALES

Governor

Congressman (District 1)

Congressman (District 2)
Diaz, Antonio
Mendaros
Torres, Ruben D

Mayor (Olongapo City)

REGION 4A

BATANGAS

Governor
Hernandez
Mandanas

Mayor (Lipa City)

CAVITE

Governor

LAGUNA

Governor

RIZAL

Mayor (Antipolo City)

REGION 4B

PALAWAN

Mayor (Puerto Princesa City)

REGION 5

CAMARINES SUR

Mayor (Naga City)

REGION 6

ANTIQUE

Governor

Congressman

CAPIZ

Governor

Congressman (District

Mayor (Roxas City)

ILOILO

Governor

Mayor (City)

NEGROS OCCIDENTAL

Congressman
(Lone District of Bacolod

Mayor (Bacolod City)

REGION 7

BOHOL

Governor

Congressman (District

Mayor (Tagbilaran City)

CEBU

Governor

Congressman (District

Congressman (District

Congressman (District 6)

Congressman
(Cebu City, District 1)

Congressman
(Cebu City, District 2)

Mayor (Cebu City)

NEGROS ORIENTAL

Governor

Congressman (District 2)

Congressman (District 3)

Mayor (Dumaguete City)

SIQUIJOR

Governor

Congressman

REGION 8

EASTERN SAMAR

Governor

Congressman

LEYTE

Governor

Congressman (District 1

Congressman (District 2

Mayor (T City)

NORTHERN SAMAR

Gover

SOUTHERN LE

Governo

REGION 9

ZAMBOANGA

REGION 1

NORTH COTABATO

Mayor

Mayor

Compiled by PDI News Bureau, PDI Southern Bureau, PDI Visayas Bureau, PDI Mindanao Bureau, PDI Research and PDI volunteers Erika Sarmiento, Ivan Jadlar and Rosa Camanong

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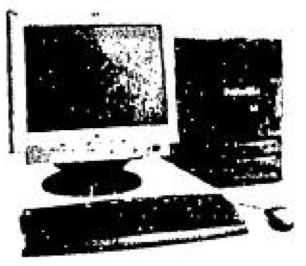

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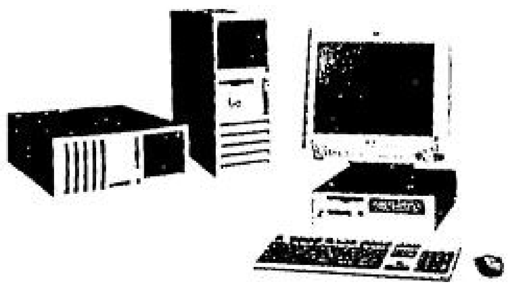

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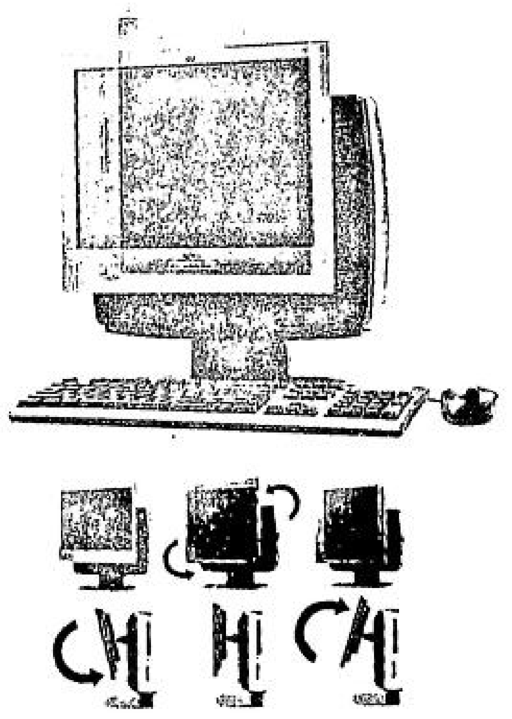

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*Source: IDC Asia/Pacific Quarterly PC Tracker, 4Q 2003

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Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

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SIX DIGIT (In exact order)
9 4 7 2 4 9

6/42 Luzon
4 6 11 18 20 40
Vis-Min
8 17 25 33 35 36

AMA QUICK COUNT

Joey concedes; Alma doing badly

By the Metro Staff

OUTGOING Mayor Joey Marquez, who is currently running for Congress, conceded defeat yesterday to his rival, former National Security Adviser Roilo Golez.

Marquez, interviewed by phone yesterday, said he believed the voters in Parañaque's second district already made clear their preference after he saw the results of the tallies from the precincts.

Golez lead

As of yesterday's partial and unofficial count by the National Movement of Free Elections (Namfrel) released at 3:15 p.m., Golez had 7,701 votes, while Marquez only had 4,621. The votes for six other aspirants got zero to 49 votes.

"I think the people have spoken and I respect their decision," he said yesterday. "Maybe the people are not ready for me to be a legislator. But I would continue with my public service."

The Parañaque mayor, who is on his third and last term, said he already congratulated Golez and had offered him his full support.

Alma trails

His estranged wife, Alma Moreno, who is running for Parañaque mayor, was also doing badly in another partial and unofficial tally.

According to the quick count being conducted by the AMA Education System, Moreno, whose name appeared as Venesa L. Marquez in her certificate of candidacy, only had 2,931 votes as against the 12,078 votes counted for rival Pablo Olivarez.

Another aspirant, Florencio Bernabe, was behind Olivarez and ahead of Moreno with 8,658 votes.

Caloocan's Malonzo

Based on AMA's tally, Reynaldo Malonzo, another third-term mayor who is also seeking a congressional post, was also trailing in the unofficial count for Caloocan City's first district.

As of 5:53 p.m. yesterday, Malonzo had 2,597 votes, which is nearly half of the votes of leading candidate Oscar Malapitan, who had 4,229 votes.

Malonzo's wife, Gwendolyn, was behind the pack of mayoral aspirants in Caloocan.

Gwendolyn, who had garnered 6096 votes, was trailing behind tally frontrunners Enrico Echiverri who had 8,471 votes; Edgar Erice (6,848); and Macario Asistio Jr. (6,720).

AN UNIDENTIFIED cigarette vendor does business as workers prepare a tally board outside the Ninoy Aquino Stadium in Manila. The tally board will show the results of the just concluded elections for local posts.
AP

Reelectionists

Also according to the 5:53 p.m. partial tally of AMA, six reelectionist mayors in Metro Manila were ahead in the count in their respective localities.

These reelectionist mayors and their closest rivals are:

- Jose Atienza of Manila who had 70,652 votes as against that of Gemiliano Lopez's 36,189 votes;
- Imelda Aguilar of Las Piñas (35,028) against Benjamin Gonzales (594);
- Jaime Fresnedi of Muntinlupa (1,755) against Elizabeth Masangkay (1,366);
- Jejomar Binay of Makati (22,357) against Oscar Ibay (5,047);
- Feliciano Belmonte of Quezon City (79,267) against Ismael Mathay Jr. (21,536); and,
- Joseph Victor Ejercito of San Juan (13,760) against Enrico San Juan (2,691).

Of the contenders, Lopez and Mathay are former mayors who are trying to make a comeback.

"I am expecting to win. Contrary to what others were claiming before the elections that it would be a tight fight between us," Belmonte told the INQUIRER.

Performance did it

The incumbent cited his performance as the reason for his confidence.

"I'm confident because I have performance as my edge. People saw my accomplishments and the changes during my term (so they voted for me)," Belmonte said.

He added that he intended to continue serving the people of Quezon City.

Although seeing from initial results that he was behind Belmonte, Mathay was not about to concede.

"We'll see," he said in a phone interview. "I have yet to see the final result."

Turnout blamed

Mathay attributed the apparent low number of votes for him to the low voter turnout.

He said many people failed to cast their votes on Monday because they could not find their names in the Computerized Voter's Lists.

Lopez and Atienza had faced off in 1988, where Lopez won by a lead of some 200,000 votes. He served as mayor until 1992.

Lopez's brother, Jim, later lost to Atienza when the present incumbent won the mayoralty in 1998. In the same elections, Atienza edged out former Sen. Ernesto Maceda, who is now vying for a Senate seat.

Atienza upset Alfredo Lim, also a senatorial candidate this elections, and former Manila representative Amado Bagatsing, in his 2001 reelection.

Atienza's early lead did not worry Lopez, as he described the mayoralty "a tight race."

In a statement, Lopez said he was not going to concede to Atienza.

Comelec proclamation

"Let's allow the Comelec to do the counting first and see who gets proclaimed as mayor," Lopez said.

In the mayoral race in Mandaluyong City, third-term Rep. Neptali Gonzales was ahead in the AMA count with 12,323 votes with his closest rival Angelyn Buan having 6,189 votes.

It can be recalled that current Mayor Benhur Abalos gave up a bid for his third and last term to allow Gonzales to run for mayor.

Instead, Abalos is running to take over the congressional post to be vacated by Gonzales.

According to the Namfrel quick count in Mandaluyong as of 5 p.m. yesterday, Abalos was enjoying a wide lead over his closest rial Ernesto Domingo.

The votes for Abalos stood at 33,890, while that of Domingo numbered only 15,379.

Abalos ticket

Abalos said his entire ticket was doing well in the tabulation, save one candidate for councilor.

"If this councilor makes it, it would be 100 percent," he said.

In Pasig City, former Mayor Vicente "Enteng" Eusebio was heard saying that he had reclaimed his post.

But his main rival, Rep. Henry Lanot, said it was he who was winning.

"It's not a landslide, it's massacre," Lanot said, describing his supposed victory.

As of 4:10 p.m. yesterday, the latest available Namfrel figures on the Pasig tally, Eusebio had 17,446 votes to his name, while Lanot had 17,129.

Fernando lead

Reelectionist Mayor Marides Lourdes Fernando of Marikina in the meantime, claimed she got around 70 percent of all the votes.

"I'm leading, around 70-30," she told the INQUIRER.

Figures provided by Namfrel as of 6:45 p.m. showed Fernando having 44,384 votes.

Jose Parsons Nabiula had the next highest votes with 15,151.

But the race between congressional candidates Romeo "Ome" Candazo and Rep. Del De Guzman was tight, she said.

"We'll know the results in a few hours," she said.

The Namfrel count had 30,597 votes going to De Guzman and 29,118 votes going to Candazo.

Parsons said his camp was set to ask the Comelec to declare a failure of elections in the city.

He cited power outages in "several barangays" and "cheating" as the primary reasons.

ELEKSYON 2004

AMA
Quick Count (Partial, Unofficial)
11 May 2004, as of 5:53 p.m.

CALOOCAN CITY

	Congressman (District 1)	
1	Malapitan, Oscar G.	4229
2	Malonzo, Reynaldo O.	2597
3	Punzalan, Susana DG.	977
4	Castalla, Saturnino V.	333
5	Quiroben, Mauro, Jr. B.	53

	Congressman (District 2)	
1	Asistio, Luis A.	
2	Bagus, Tolentino J.	
3	Gonzales, Benedixto, Jr. M	

	Mayor	
1	Echiverri, Enrico R.	8471
2	Erice, Edgar R.	6848
3	Asistio, Macario, Jr. A.	6720
4	Malonzo, Gwendolyn E.	6096
5	Orbe, Romualdo C.	338
6	Peras, Enrique, Jr. G.	232

LAS PIÑAS CITY

	Congressman	
1	Aguilar-Villar, Cynthia A.	32973
2	Pulido, Roberto Rafael J.	2885
3	Buenaflor, Nestor C.	1119

	Mayor	
1	Aguilar, Imelda T.	35028
2	Gonzales, Benjamin R.	594
3	Antonio, Francisco, Jr. A.	510
4	Fabian, Francis M.	457
5	Enciso, Leonicio C.	436

MAKATI CITY

	Congressman (District 1)	
1	Bitanga, Mark Donald C.	
2	Locsin, Teodoro, Jr. L.	

	Congressman (District 2)	
1	Aquino, Agapito A.	
2	Manalili, Antonio G.	

	Mayor	
1	Binay, Jejomar C.	22357
2	Ibay, Oscar M.	5047
3	De Vera, Amado III G.	1290
4	Rempillo, Romeo	381

MALABON CITY

	Congressman	
1	Cinco, Roberto T.	
2	Lacson, Cipriano J.	
3	Sandoval, Frederico II S.	

	Mayor	
1	Oreta, Canuto S.	
2	Sandoval, Jeannie N.	
3	Rojas, Melencio, Jr. T.	
4	Yambao, Mark Allan Jay G.	

MANDALUYONG CITY

	Congressman	
1	Abalos, Benjamin, Jr. DC.	
2	Domingo, Ernesto, Jr. A.	
3	Lebron, Jessie B.	
4	Seriña, Felix B.	

	Mayor	
1	Gonzales, Neptali H.	12323
2	Buan, Angelyn D.	6189
3	Abalos, Arsenio S.	1005
4	Calibo, Narciso M.	599

CITY OF MANILA

	Congressman (District 1)	
1	Liguidliguid, Abraham E.	
2	Nieva, Ernesto A.	
3	Quirante, Rodolfo G.	

	Congressman (District 2)	
1	Lacson, Marlon M.	
2	Lopez, Jaime C.	
3	Mendoza, Robert Brent M.	

	Congressman (District 3)	
1	Angpin, Harry C.	
2	Roces, Miles M.	

	Congressman (District 4)	
1	Bacani, Rodolfo C.	
2	Bagatsing, Manuel S.	
3	Icaonapo, Jose, Jr. P.	
4	Sarza, Joel A.	

	Congressman (District 5)	
1	Alvarado, Junel C.	
2	Atienza, Alejandro I.	
3	Encarnacion, Gloria R.	
4	Hizon, Joey D	

	Congressman (District 6)	
1	Abante, Bienvenido, Jr. M.	9481
2	Ocampo, Rosenda Ann M.	7554
3	Veloso, Lucano M.	3570
4	Logarta, Julio, Jr. E.	2184
5	Galla, Oswaldo D.	234
6	Nuñez, Romeo P.	112
7	Sunga, Emmanuel B.	85
8	Lao, Caridad DR.	60

	Mayor	
1	Atienza, Jose, Jr. C.	70652
2	Lopez, Gemiliano, Jr. C.	36189
3	Cantal, Felix C.	2647
4	Abad, Onofre E.	953
5	Gamo, Antonio G.	768
6	Fernandez, Eduardo P.	544

MARIKINA CITY

	Congressman	
1	Candazo, Romeo DC.	
2	De Guzman, Del R.	
3	Malana, Carlos F.	
4	Rivera, Benedicto Luis A.	

	Mayor	
1	Curry, Richard A.	
2	Fernando, Ma. Lourdes C.	
3	Maglajos, Evenicula P.	
4	Molina, Benjamin, Jr. Q.	
5	Nablula, Jose Parsons A.	

MUNTINLUPA CITY

	Congressman	
1	Biazon, Rozanno Rufino B.	
2	Boncayao, Patricio, Jr. L.	
3	Fernandez, Jacob L.	

	Mayor	
1	Fresnedi, Jaime DR.	1755
2	Masangkay, Elizabeth A.	1366
3	Chua, Vicente Y.	582
4	Balbanero, Pedro R.	52
5	Marmeto, Oscar A.	

PARANAQUE CITY

	Congressman	
1	Ballelos, Manuel, Jr. E.	
2	Matti, Jose Luis, Jr. K.	
3	Varona, Netz P	

	Congressman (District 1)	
1	Banaga, Tomas, Jr. T.	
2	Caunan, Menandro C.	
3	Ferrrer, Walfrido N.	
4	Nery, Jaime, Jr. J.	
5	Pureza, Rogelio A.	
6	Reyes, Bernardo P.	
7	Sarmiento, Jose N.	
8	Zialcita, Eduardo C.	

	Congressman (District 2)	
1	Golez, Roilo S.	
2	Marquez, Doroteo Q.	
3	Marquez, Joey P.	
4	Mesana, Elpidio, Jr. M.	
5	Montano, Pedro C.	

	Mayor	
1	Olivarez, Pablo R.	12078
2	Bernabe, Florencio, Jr. M.	8658
3	Marquez, Vanesa L.	2931
4	Villaflor, Ricardo V.	346
5	Nery, Jose, Sr. C.	159
6	De Asis, Maritess B.	72
7	Flores, Fregie C.	18
8	Matias, Ma. Luisa B.	16

PASAY CITY

	Congressman	
1	Calixto-Rubiano, Emi G.	
2	Cornejo, Crisanto S.	
3	Dy, Consueto A.	
4	Evangelista, Justo D.	

	Mayor	
1	Alejaga, Rosemary L.	
2	Marcelo, Romulo, Sr. M.	
3	Penaflor, Noel-Franciso T.	
4	Santos, Ricardo E.	
5	Trinidad, Wenceslao B.	

PASIG CITY

	Congressman	
1	Romulo, Roman T.	11091
2	Jaworski, Robert Vincent Jude B.	9795
3	Cariño, Noel M.	8658
4	Bernardo, Lorna A.	7349
5	Salcedo, Divino N.	353
6	Asuncion, Francis M.	268

	Mayor	
1	Eusebio, Vicente P.	19853
2	Lanot, Henry P.	15042
3	Benavides, Charmie Q.	1136
4	Obispo, Vener DV.	561
5	Fabella, Vicente F.	377
6	Iglesias, Alexander C.	340
7	Bueno, Belen S.	124

QUEZON CITY

	Congressman (District 1)	
1	Crisologo, Vincent P.	9094
2	Puyat, Berna C.	8299
3	Sarino, Wilma A.	3103
4	Ramos, Montano DG.	1818
5	Samson, Moises S.	1765
6	Guerrero, Arturo III C.	436

	Congressman (District 2)	
1	Agcaoili, Delfin, Jr. R.	
2	Jimenez, Walter Wahab O.	
3	Liban, Dante V.	
4	Mathay, Ismael III G.	
5	Serrano, Enrico S.	
6	Susano, Mary Ann L.	

	Congressman (District 3)	
1	Planas, Michael F.	9353
2	Defensor, Ma. Theresa T.	4566
3	Baja, Emmanuel S.	557
4	Cabochan, Anna Liza C.	

	Congressman (District 4)	
1	Daza, Nanette C.	
2	Infante, Jose L.	
3	Rillo, Marcel C.	
4	Suntay, Jesus C.	

	Mayor	
1	Belmonte, Feliciano, Jr. R.	79267
2	Mathay, Ismael, Jr. A.	21536
3	Co, Andres K.	1360
4	Mathay, Christian V.	

VALENZUELA CITY

	Congressman (District 1)	
1	Bularan, Romeo P.	
2	Carlos, Jose Emmanuel L.	
3	Gatchalian, Rexlon T.	

	Congressman (District 2)	
1	Lucas, Pablo H.	
2	Serapio, Antonio M.	
3	Tiquia, Carlitos B.	

	Mayor	
1	Gatchalian, Sherwin T.	7925
2	Gunigundo, Magtanggol T.	7214
3	Carlos, Margarita C.	5575

SAN JUAN

	Congressman	
1	Alcovendaz, Ericson A.	
2	Gonzales, Jose Mari C.	
3	Jimenez, Adam, Jr. M.	
4	Zamora, Ronaldo B.	

	Mayor	
1	Ejercito, Joseph Victor G.	13760
2	San Juan, Enrico A.	2691
3	Marasigan, Edgardo G.	417

PATEROS-TAGUIG

	Congressman	
1	Cayetano, Alan Peter S.	
2	Flores, Damaso S.	
3	Garcia, Isidro B.	

PATEROS

	Mayor	
1	Borja, Benjamin, Jr. U.	
2	Buenaventura, Willie E.	
3	Capco, Rosendo T.	
4	Ponce, Rustico V.	

TAGUIG

	Mayor	
1	Casas, Rene	
2	Labao-Alzona, Ma. Loidao	
3	Quilitano, Ferdinand	
4	Tiñga, Sigfrido	

NAVOTAS

	Mayor	
1	Marquez, Fredie A.	
2	Monroy, Salvador DJ.	
3	Tiangco, Tobia M.	

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8 17 25 33 35 36

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Marquez, interviewed by phone yesterday, said he believed the voters in Parañaque's second district already made clear their preference after he saw the results of the tallies from the precincts.

Golez lead

As of yesterday's partial and unofficial count by the National Movement of Free Elections (Namfrel) released at 3:15 p.m., Golez had 7,701 votes, while Marquez only had 4,621. The votes for six other aspirants got zero to 49 votes.

"I think the people have spoken and I respect their decision," he said yesterday. "Maybe the people are not ready for me to be a legislator. But I would continue with my public service."

The Parañaque mayor, who is on his third and last term, said he already congratulated Golez and had offered him his full support.

Alma trails

His estranged wife, Alma Moreno, who is running for Parañaque mayor, was also doing badly in another partial and unofficial tally.

According to the quick count being conducted by the AMA Education System, Moreno, whose name appeared as Venesa L. Marquez in her certificate of candidacy, only had 2,931 votes as against the 12,078 votes counted for rival Pablo Olivarez.

Another aspirant, Florencio Bernabe, was behind Olivarez and ahead of Moreno with 8,658 votes.

Caloocan's Malonzo

Based on AMA's tally, Reynaldo Malonzo, another third-term mayor who is also seeking congressional post, was also trailing in the unofficial count for Caloocan City's first district.

As of 5:53 p.m. yesterday, Malonzo had 2,597 votes, which is nearly half of the votes of leading candidate Oscar Malapitan, who had 4,229 votes.

Malonzo's wife, Gwendolyn, was behind the pack of mayoral aspirants in Caloocan.

Gwendolyn, who had garnered 6096 votes, was trailing behind tally frontrunners Enrico Echiverri who had 8,471 votes; Edgar Erice (6,848); and Macario Asistio Jr. (6,720).

Reelectionists

Also according to the 5:53 p.m. partial tally of AMA, six reelectionist mayors in Metro Manila were ahead in the count in their respective localities.

These reelectionist mayors and their closest rivals are:

- Jose Atienza of Manila who had 70,652 votes as against that of Gemiliano Lopez's 36,189 votes
- Imelda Aguilar of Las Piñas (35,028) against Benjamin Gonzales (594);
- Jaime Fresnedi of Muntinlupa (1,755) against Elizabeth Masangkay (1,366);
- Jejomar Binay of Makati (22,357) against Oscar Ibay (5,047);
- Feliciano Belmonte of Quezon City (79,267) against Ismael Mathay Jr. (21,536); and,
- Joseph Victor Ejercito of San Juan (13,760) against Enrico San Juan (2,691).

Of the contenders, Lopez and Mathay are former mayors who are trying to make a comeback.

"I am expecting to win. Contrary to what others were claiming before the elections that it would be a tight fight between us," Belmonte told the INQUIRER.

Performance did it

The incumbent cited his performance as the reason for his confidence.

"I'm confident because I have performance as my edge. People saw my accomplishments and the changes during my term (so they voted for me)," Belmonte said.

He added that he intended to continue serving the people of Quezon City.

Although seeing from initial results that he was behind Belmonte, Mathay was not about to concede.

"We'll see," he said in a phone interview. "I have yet to see the final result."

Turnout blamed

Mathay attributed the apparent low number of votes for him to the low voter turnout.

He said many people failed to cast their votes on Monday because they could not find their names in the Computerized Voter's Lists.

Lopez and Atienza had faced off in 1988, where Lopez won by a lead of some 200,000 votes. He served as mayor until 1992.

Lopez's brother, Jim, later lost to Atienza when the present incumbent won the mayoralty in 1998. In the same elections, Atienza edged out former Sen. Ernesto Maceda, who is now vying for a Senate seat.

Atienza upset Alfredo Lim, also a senatorial candidate this election, and former Manila representative Amado Bagatsing, in his 2001 reelection.

Atienza's early lead did not worry Lopez, as he described the mayoralty "a tight race."

In a statement, Lopez said he was not going to concede to Atienza.

Comelec proclamation

"Let's allow the Comelec to do the counting first and see who gets proclaimed as mayor," Lopez said.

In the mayoral race in Mandaluyong City, third-term Rep. Neptali Gonzales was ahead in the AMA count with 12,323 votes with his closest rival Angelyn Buan having 6,189 votes.

It can be recalled that current Mayor Benhur Abalos gave up a bid for his third and last term to allow Gonzales to run for mayor.

Instead, Abalos is running to take over the congressional post to be vacated by Gonzales.

According to the Namfrel quick count in Mandaluyong as of 5 p.m. yesterday, Abalos was enjoying a wide lead over his closest rival Ernesto Domingo.

The votes for Abalos stood at 33,890, while that of Domingo numbered only 15,379.

Abalos ticket

Abalos said his entire ticket was doing well in the tabulation, save one candidate for councilor.

"If this councilor makes it, it would be 100 percent," he said.

In Pasig City, former Mayor Vicente "Enteng" Eusebio was heard saying that he had reclaimed his post.

But his main rival, Rep. Henry Lanot, said it was he who was winning.

"It's not a landslide, it's massacre," Lanot said, describing his supposed victory.

As of 4:10 p.m. yesterday, the latest available Namfrel figures on the Pasig tally, Eusebio had 17,446 votes to his name, while Lanot had 17,129.

Fernando lead

Reelectionist Mayor Marides Lourdes Fernando of Marikina in the meantime, claimed she got around 70 percent of all the votes.

"I'm leading, around 70-30," she told the INQUIRER.

Figures provided by Namfrel as of 6:45 p.m. showed Fernando having 44,384 votes.

Jose Parsons Nabiula had the next highest votes with 15,151.

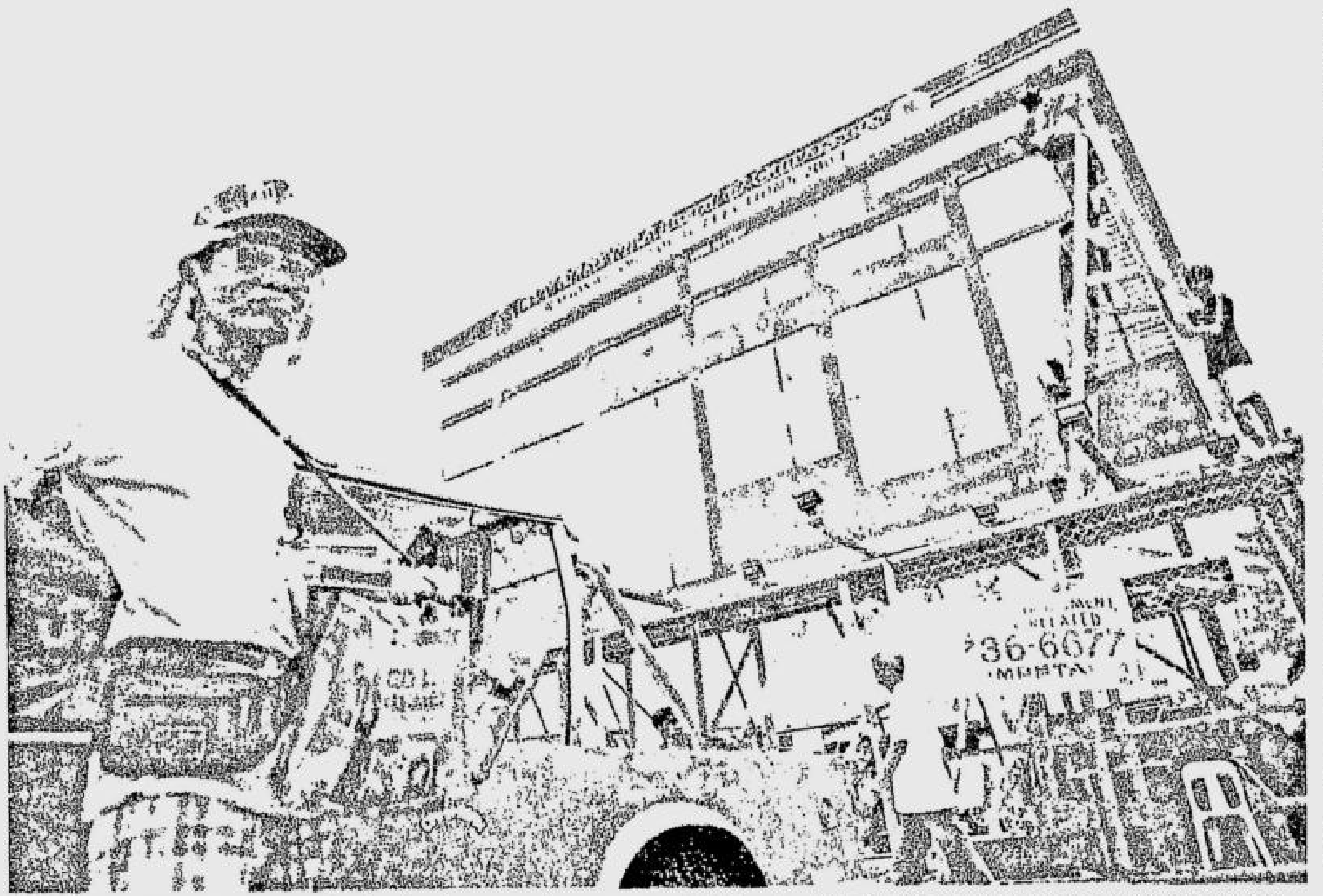
But the race between congressional candidates Romeo "Ome" Candazo and Rep. Del De Guzman was tight, she said.

"We'll know the results in a few hours," she said.

The Namfrel count had 30,597 votes going to De Guzman and 29,118 votes going to Candazo.

Parsons said his camp was set to ask the Comelec to declare failure of elections in the city.

He cited power outages in "several barangays" and "cheating" as the primary reasons



AN UNIDENTIFIED cigarette vendor does business as workers prepare a tally board outside the Ninoy Aquino Stadium in Manila. The tally board will show the results of the just concluded elections for local posts.

ELEKSYON 2004

AMA
Quick Count (Partial, Unofficial)
11 May 2004, as of 5:53 p.m.

CALOOCAN CITY

Congressman (District 1)

	Malapitan, Oscar G	4229
	Malonzo, Reynaldo O.	2597
3	Punzalan, Susana DG.	977
4	Castalla, Saturnino V.	333
5	Quiroben, Mauro, Jr. B.	53

Congressman (District 2)

1	Asistio, Luis A.	
2	Bagus, Tolentino J.	
3	Gonzales, Benedicto, Jr. M	

Mayor

1	Echiverri, Enrico R.	8471
2	Erice, Edgar R.	6848
3	Asistio, Macario, Jr. A.	6720
4	Malonzo, Gwendolyn E.	6096
5	Orbe, Romualdo C.	338
6	Pera, Enrique, Jr. G	232

LAS PIÑAS CITY

Congressman

	Aguilar-Villar, Cynthia A	32973
	Pulido, Roberto Rafael J	2885
	Buenaflor, Nestor C	1119

Mayor

	Aguilar, Imelda T	35028
	Gonzales, Benjamin R	594
3	Antonio, Francisco Jr. A.	510
4	Fabian, Francis M.	457
	Enciso, Leonicio C	436

MAKATI CITY

Congressman (District 1)

1	Bitanga, Mark Donald C	
2	Locsin, Teodoro, Jr. L.	

Congressman (District 2)

1	Aquino, Agapito A	
2	Manalili, Antonio G.	

Mayor

1	Binay, Jejomar C	22357
2	Ibay, Oscar M	5047
3	De Vera, Amado III	1290

MALABON CITY

Congressman

1	Cinco, Roberto T.	
2	Lacson, Cipriano J.	
3	Sandoval, Frederico II S.	

Mayor

1	Oreta, Canuto S.	
2	Sandoval, Jeannie N.	
3	Rojas, Melencio, Jr. T	
4	Yambao, Mark Allan Jay G.	

MANDALUYONG CITY

Congressman

1	Abalos, Benjamin, Jr. DC.	
2	Domingo, Ernesto, Jr. A.	
3	Lebron, Jessie B.	
4	Seriña, Felix B.	

Mayor

1	Gonzales, Neptali H.	12323
2	Buan, Angelyn D.	6189
3	Abalos, Arsenio S.	1005
4	Calibo, Narciso M.	599

CITY OF MANILA

Congressman (District 1)

1	Liguidliguid, Abraham E	
2	Nieva, Ernesto A.	
3	Quirante, Rodolfo G.	

Congressman (District 2)

1	Lacson, Marlon M	
2	Lopez, Jaime C.	
3	Mendoza, Robert Brent M	

Congressman (District 3)

1	Angping, Harry C	
2	Roces, Miles M	

Congressman (District 4)

1	Bacani, Rodolfo C	
2	Bagatsing, Manuel S.	
3	Icaonapo, Jose, Jr. P.	
4	Sarza, Joel A	

Congressman (District 5)

1	Alvarado, Junel C	
2	Atienza, Alejandro I	
3	Encarnacion, Gloria R.	

Congressman (District 6)

1	Abante, Bienvenido, Jr. M	9481
2	Ocampo, Rosenda Ann M.	7554
3	Veloso, Lucano M.	3570
4	Logarta, Julio, Jr. E.	2184
5	Galla, Oswaldo D	234
6	Nuñez, Romeo P.	112
7	Sunga, Emmanuel B.	85
8	Lao, Caridad DR.	60

Mayor

1	Atienza, Jose, Jr. C.	70652
2	Lopez, Gemiliano, Jr. C.	36189
3	Cantal, Felix C.	2647
4	Abad, Onofre E.	953
5	Gamo, Antonio G.	768
6	Fernandez, Eduardo P.	544

MARIKINA CITY

Congressman

1	Candazo, Romeo DC.	
2	De Guzman, Del R	
3	Malana, Carlos F.	
4	Rivera, Benedicto Luis A.	

Mayor

1	Curry, Richard A	
2	Fernando, Ma. Lourdes C.	
3	Maglajos, Evenicula P.	
4	Molina, Benjamin, Jr. O.	
5	Nabiula, Jose Parsons A.	

MUNTINLUPA CITY

Congressman

1	Biazon, Ruzanno Rufino B.	
2	Boncayao, Patricio, Jr. L.	
3	Fernandez, Jacob L	

Mayor

1	Fresnedi, Jaime DR	1755
2	Masangkay, Elizabeth A.	1366
3	Chua, Vicente Y.	582
4	Balbanero, Pedro R.	52
5	Marmeto, Oscar A.	

PARANAQUE CITY

Congressman

1	Ballelos, Manuel, Jr. E	
2	Matti, Jose Luis, Jr. K	

Congressman (District 1)

1	Banaga, Tomas Jr. T	
2	Caunan, Menandro C	
3	Ferrer, Walfrido N	
4	Nery, Jaime, Jr. J	
5	Pureza, Rogelio A.	
6	Reyes, Bernardo P.	
7	Sarmiento, Jose N.	
8	Zialcita, Eduardo C.	

Congressman (District 2)

1	Golez, Roilo S.	
2	Marquez, Doroteo O.	
3	Marquez, Joey P.	
4	Mesana, Elpidio, Jr. M	
5	Montano, Pedro C.	

Mayor

1	Olivarez, Pablo R	12078
2	Bernabe, Florencio, Jr. M.	8658
3	Marquez, Vanesa L.	2931
4	Villaflor, Ricardo V.	346
5	Nery, Jose, Sr. C	159
6	De Asis, Maritess B.	72
7	Flores, Fregie C.	18
8	Matias, Ma. Luisa B.	16

PASAY CITY

Congressman

1	Calixto-Rubiano, Emi G.	
2	Cornejo, Crisanto S.	
3	Dy, Consuelo A.	
4	Evangelista, Justo D.	

Mayor

1	Alejaga, Rosemary L.	
2	Marcelo, Romulo, Sr. M	
3	Penaflor, Noel-Franciso T	
4	Santos, Ricardo E	
5	Trinidad, Wenceslao B.	

PASIG CITY

Congressman

1	Romulo, Roman T	11091
2	Jaworski, Robert Vincent Jude B	9795
3	Cariño, Noel M.	8658
4	Bernardo, Lorna A	7349
5	Salcedo, Divino N	353
6	Asuncion, Francis M	268

Mayor

1	Eusebio, Vicente P	19853
2	Lanot, Henry P	15042
3	Benavides, Charmie O.	1136
4	Obispo, Vener DV	561
5	Fabella, Vicente F	377
6	Iglesias, Alexander	340
7	Bueno, Belen S	124

QUEZON CITY

Congressman (District 1)

1	Crisologo, Vincent P	9094
2	Puyat, Berna C	8299
3	Sarino, Wilma A	3103
4	Ramos, Montano DG	1818
5	Samson, Moises S	1765
6	Guerrero, Arturo III C	436

Congressman (District 2)

1	Aguaoil, Delfin, Jr. R.	
2	Jimenez, Walter Wahab O	
3	Liban, Dante V	
4	Mathay, Ismael III G.	
5	Serrano, Enrico S	
6	Susano, Mary Ann L	

Congressman (District 3)

1	Planas, Michael F	9353
2	Defensor, Ma. Theresa T	4566
3	Baja, Emmanuel S	557
4	Cabochan, Anna Liza C	

Congressman (District 4)

1	Daza, Nanette	
2	Infante, Jose L	
3	Rillo, Marcel C	
4	Suntay, Jesus C	

Mayor

1	Belmonte, Feliciano, Jr. R.	79267
2	Mathay, Ismael, Jr. A.	21536
3	Co, Andres K.	1360
4	Mathay, Christian V	

VALENZUELA CITY

Congressman (District 1)

1	Bularan, Rommel F	
2	Carlos, Jose Emmanuel L	
3	Gatchalian, Rexlon T.	

Congressman (District 2)

1	Lucas, Pablo H.	
2	Serapio, Antonio M	
3	Tiquia, Carlitos B	

Mayor

1	Gatchalian, Sherwin T	[illegible]
2	Gunigundo, Magtanggol	[illegible]
3	Carlos, Margarita C	[illegible]

SAN JUAN

Congressman

1	Alcovendaz, Ericson A.	
2	Gonzales, Jose Mari C.	
3	Jimenez, Adam, Jr. M.	
4	Zamora, Ronaldo B.	

Mayor

1	Ejercito, Joseph Victor G.	13760
2	San Juan, Enrico A.	2691
3	Marasigan, Edgardo G.	41

PATEROS-TAGUIG

Congressman

1	Cayetano, Alan Peter S	
2	Flores, Damaso S	
3	Garcia, Isidro B.	

PATEROS

Mayor

1	Borja, Benjamin, Jr. U	
2	Buenaventura, Willie E	
3	Capco, Rosendo T	
4	Ponce, Rustico V.	

TAGUIG

Mayor

1	Casa, Rene	
2	Labao-Alzona, Ma. Loida O	
3	Quilitano, Ferdinand	
4	Tinga, Sigfrido	

NAVOTAS

Mayor

	Marquez, Fredie A	
	Monroy, Salvador C	
	Tiangco, Tobias M	

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Post-poll cleanup starts

Fernando gives staff a week to do the job

MMDA personnel remove campaign posters from a wall along one of Manila's busy streets. ERIK ARAZAS

By the Metro Staff

THE POST-ELECTION cleanup has begun.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday said he has given his personnel one week to clean up the metropolis of campaign paraphernalia.

Fernando said 2,000 members of the MMDA landscape and maintenance team were deployed starting yesterday to remove election posters, banners, leaflets and flyers.

He added that the MMDA personnel have been using water from dirty streams to remove poll materials from walls and posts.

"The bacteria from the water would eat the starch and cause the removal of the posters after a few days," Fernando explained, adding that he learned the technique from some local chemists.

Fernando also appealed to Metro Manila residents to voluntarily clean up the areas near their houses.

In Pateros, MMDA dispatcher Moises San Pedro said around 15 MMDA personnel have begun cleaning the town from M. Almeda Street to San Joaquin.

More trash

"*Mas grabe yung kalat ngayon kasi* national elections (This year's national elections produced more trash than the last elections)," San Pedro said.

In Quezon City, incumbent Mayor Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte led a drive to rid the city of the huge mess caused by the wild and chaotic race for public office.

While doing his bit by tearing down his own campaign posters and those of his rivals, Belmonte of the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats also urged other candidates to help clean up the surroundings.

"I hope other politicians will also help clean the mess. Those who ran in the elections owe it to the people to restore order around," Belmonte told INQUIRER. "I want to do my share in cleaning up the mess and I want to set the example for other candidates to do the same."

Meanwhile, Manila's streetsweepers had a busy day yesterday cleaning up the mess caused by the elections.

They had to rid school grounds used as polling places of sample ballots, flyers, paper cups and other trash.

Cops urged to help

Policemen in Manila were encouraged to help in the cleanup of posters and streamers.

Western Police District spokesperson Chief Insp. Gerry Agunod said that though it is not the task of the police to take down or remove the campaign materials, operatives in Manila could help if they want to. "It would be better if they could help as well, especially since we want to keep Manila clean."

Some residents were seen tearing down campaign posters in northern Metro Manila. Rains, which fell the other day, had washed out some posters, but most had remained in walls and posts. *Margaux Ortiz, Jaybelyn Caldez, Desiree Silang, Tina Santos, Mel Lawrence de Guzman, Melodie Tumambing, Christina Rondario, Tarra Quismundo, Jennica Amurao, DJ Yap, Leila Salaverria, Edson Tandoc Jr.*

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FACTORY OUTLET

Debates, brownouts, security threats delay Metro canvass

By Luige del Puerto

THE LONG, and often agonizing, wait began for candidates and their supporters as canvassers started the manual tallying of the election returns yesterday.

Most canvassing areas in eastern Metro Manila opened late yesterday morning.

In San Juan, lawyers of mayoral candidates Erick San Juan and Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito were still debating why the canvassing was suspended the night before. The debate went on even after lunch.

San Juan's camp, led by lawyer Rexie Efren Bugaring, walked out of the San Juan Elementary School at 3 p.m., just minutes after the canvassing started.

The lawyer said the proceedings has become illegal. Under the law, the canvassing should never have been suspended, he argued.

Pasig Comelec Officer Romeo Alcazar said depending on the pace of the canvassers, the tallying could last up to three days for the local posts.

Power outage

In Marikina, a power outage hit the the Nangka Elementary School and the SSS Village Elementary School around 10 p.m., delaying the counting of votes.

A TV report said armed men allegedly shot the transformer on Balite corner Balubad Streets. It exploded, causing the brownout.

But Meralco linesman Benjie C. Javier said overloading caused the power failure. The police also found no bullet marks on the transformer.

Using candle light and flashlights, teachers and poll watchers went ahead with the counting. A generator later lighted up the school.

The elementary schools of Sitio Kaila, Melchor Lorez and Dahig in Antipolo City also experienced power outages, forcing the Comelec to transfer the canvassing from the Ynares Center to the Rizal Capitol in Pasig City.

Comelec Officer Arnulfo Pioquinto cited security threats as the reason for the transfer.

Yesterday, the Capitol lobby was in disarray as thousands of election return envelopes and book of voters were left lying on the floor.

Disgruntled, tired and sleepy teachers ate out of packed lunches. They complained of their "unsystematic" transfer to Pasig City. *Michael Jobert Navallo, Jamie Alarcon, Charlene Tordesillas and Donna Potes*

Manila LP bet fumes over Angping votes

By Tarra Quismundo and D.J. Yap

IT JUST keeps getting more complicated.

Liberal Party Manila 3rd district congressional bet Miles Roces yesterday questioned the counting of votes for his rival, incumbent Harry Angping.

Roces, through lawyer Romulo Macalintal, filed a petition for correction of manifest error to Manila's Board of Canvassers.

The correction he wanted made was the number of votes entered in the name of Angping, of the Nationalist People's Coalition, or his wife Maria Zenaida.

Angping's wife replaced the incumbent as NPC candidate after he withdrew from the race on May 4, to preempt a May 5 ruling on his disqualification case, which he had sensed was unfavorable.

Members of the board of election inspectors in schools in Quiapo, Sta. Cruz and Binondo, counted Angping votes when they read the ballots.

No order?

At the A. Mabini Elementary School, teachers counted the Angping votes as they did not receive any official Comelec order not to do so.

But, as far as Roces is concerned, he is running unopposed, and Angping was disqualified on April 30 as the Comelec had resolved.

On election day, Roces' camp released a Comelec order telling BEIs to delete Angping from the certified list of candidates.

The order, dated May 10, and signed by Comelec Law Department Director 4 Alioden Dalaig, directed the Comelec field officers to implement Comelec Resolution 6823, declaring Angping disqualified.

Charges, countercharges fly fast

By the Metro Staff

MASSIVE cheating. Vote buying. Black propaganda.

These were the charges and counter-charges hurled by Metro candidates yesterday, even as the official canvassing of votes in Metro Manila started yesterday.

In Caloocan City, Mayor Rey Malonzo claimed massive cheating marred the conduct of the elections in the city on Monday.

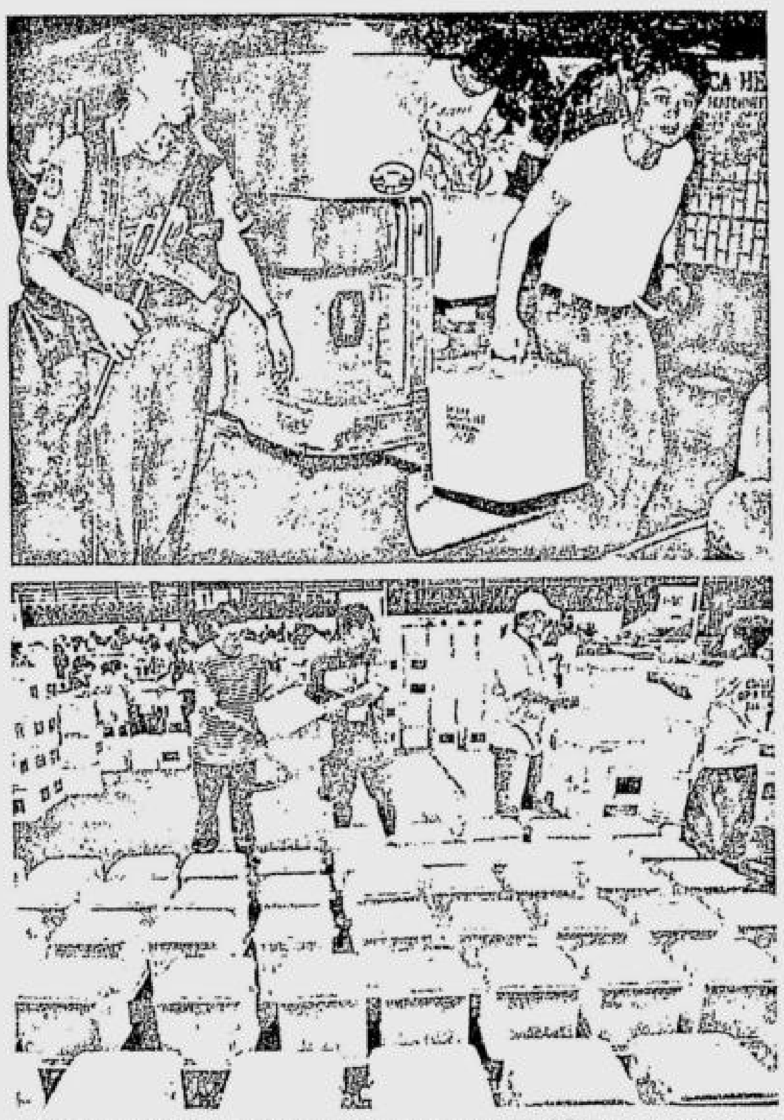
Malonzo, in an interview with the INQUIRER, accused the camp of Rep. Enrico Echiverri of massive cheating and threatening teachers and voters.

Echiverri denied the allegations, saying they were just part of Malonzo's "desperate moves." Based on partial, unofficial results, Echiverri is leading the mayoralty race in the city.

In Quezon City, mayoralty candidate Ismael Mathay Jr. and Mike Planas, who is running for Congress in the city's third district, yesterday cried foul over the claim of some quarters that they were responsible for the distribution of black propaganda materials and fraudulent sample ballots against their political rivals in polling places on Monday.

"I am for clean and honest elections. I don't have anything to do with that and besides, I don't have the capacity to do that," Mathay said, referring to the P500 bill with his rival, incumbent mayor Feliciano Belmonte's smiling face superimposed on that of national hero Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino.

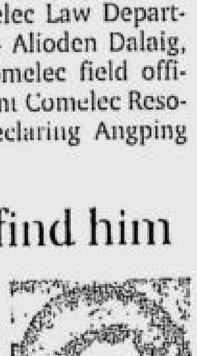
In Pasig, the results of the elections hang in the balance as the city is stuck in a legal battle between two contending parties.


DELIVERY of election returns took some time, with many canvassers taking jeepneys to deliver them to tabulation centers. PHOTOS BY BOY CABRIDO AND ERIK ARAZAS

Rep. Henry Lanot, a mayoralty candidate there, said his camp filed yesterday a petition with the Commission on Elections seeking to stop the canvassing and the proclamation of a winner.

Lanot wants the Comelec en banc to first resolve the disqualification case he filed against former Mayor Vicente Eusebio before pushing through with the canvassing. But as of presstime, the canvassing at city hall continued.

Help us find him


MACALE

THE INQUIRER needs your help in looking for 5-year-old Norman "Bumbay" C. Macale.

The boy was reported missing since Thursday afternoon and was last seen around Crossing in Mandaluyong City. He is fair-skinned, and has black eyes and curly hair.

One of Bumbay's relatives fears that he may have been brought to Bicol.

If you happen to know the boy's whereabouts or can give any information where he is, please contact Eddie Cailao as soon as possible at 721-6129.

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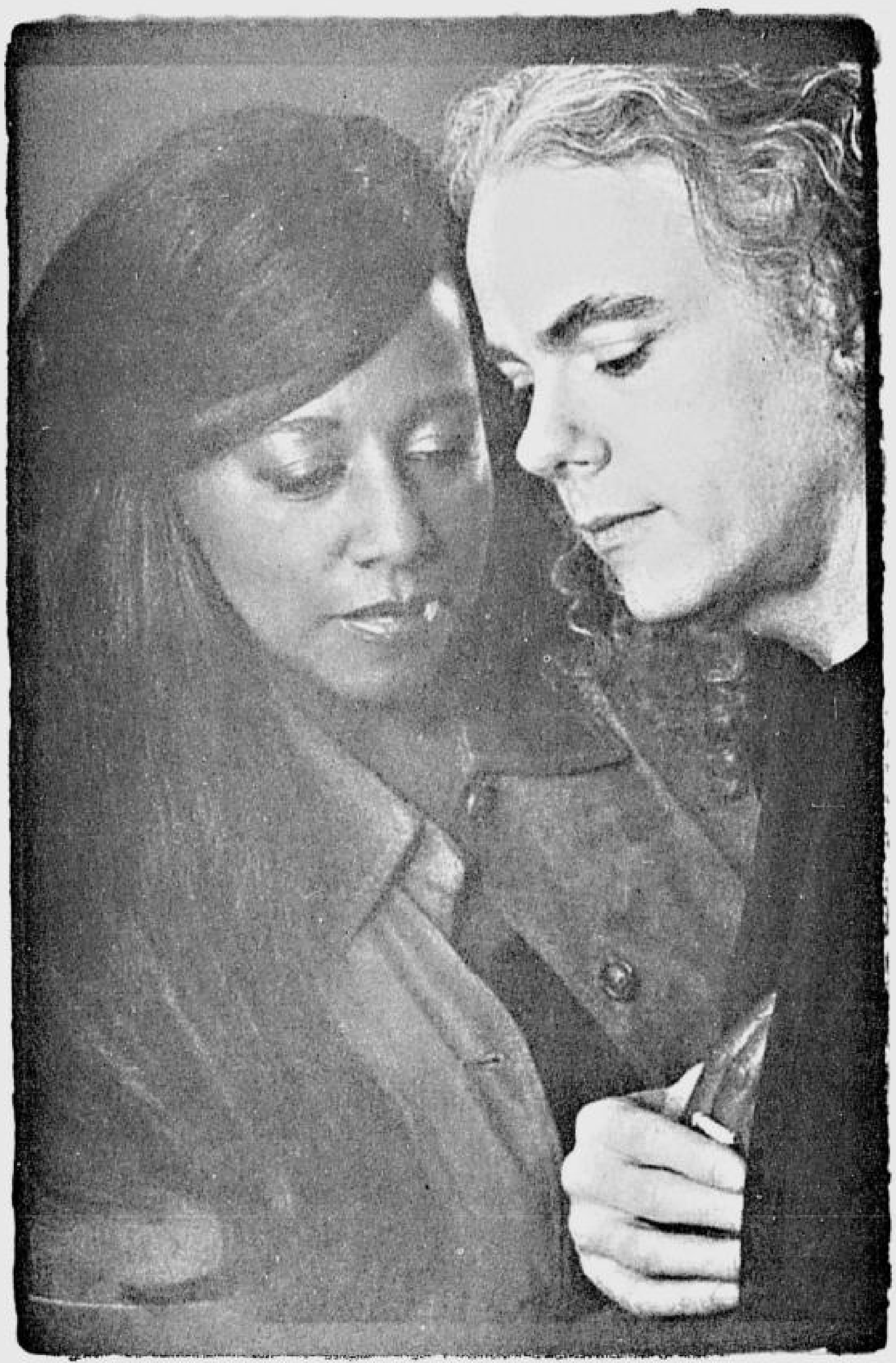

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Title	Ringtone	Polytone	Lyrics
Time After Time	N136	T136	LY136
Close To You	N137	T137	LY137
I Will	N138	T138	LY138
Loving You	N139	T139	LY139
Let's Stay Together	N140	T140	LY140

Complete Promo Mechanics for Tuck and Patti:

1. Promo is open to anyone who purchases a Globe Platinum Plan (Platinum Plan 5,000, 7,000 and 10,000) and G-Flex Platinum Plan (5,000, 7,000 and 10,000) at any Globe Telecom Business Center or Hub.
2. Promo is valid from May 12- May 18, 2004.
3. Those who purchase a Globe Platinum Plan are entitled to a chance to win one pair of tickets to Tuck and Patti (worth P3,000 each). The Globe Handyphone number shall serve as the raffle entry. Each new subscription is entitled to one electronic raffle entry. Globe's ISG department shall upload all the entries to the raffle randomizer. There will only be one (1) winner.
4. Only entries received on or before May 18, 2004, will be included in the draw. Raffle shall be held at 5/F GT Plaza Tower 1, ISG Department on May 19, 3PM in the presence of Globe Handyphone and DTI representatives. The winner shall be validated and should meet the following requirements:
   a. The winner's Globe Handyphone account should be working and active during the time of the draw
   b. The winner should have no overdue balance
   c. The winner could claim the tickets prior to the date of the concert
5. The randomizer shall also draw five (5) entries which will serve as back ups in order of chronology, in case the drawn winner does not meet the requirements in item 4.
6. Winner shall receive a call from Globe through his Globe Handyphone. Winner will also be sent an official notice through a courier service informing him that he has won and prize claiming procedures. Winner must redeem the prize at 4/F GT Plaza Tower 2, Marketing Department prior to the concert on May 21, 2004.
7. Upon claiming of the tickets, the winner should present a valid proof of identification.
8. Employees of Globe Telecom, Harrison Communications Inc. including their relatives up the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from winning in the promotion.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1035, Series of 2004.

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SPORTS TV

BASKETBALL: 2004 NBA Playoffs - Spurs vs Lakers, Game 4, Western Semifinals; 10:30 a.m. (r-8 p.m.); Solar Sports - The Fab Four of Shaq, Kobe, the Glove and the Mailman attempt to tie the series when they host Tim Duncan and San Antonio.

NBA Greatest Game - Sixers vs Bucks, Game 7, 1986 Eastern Conf Semis; 11 a.m.; Solar Sports - Milwaukee edges Philadelphia in overtime and move onto the Eastern Conference Finals. Milwaukee forward Terry Cummings leads the Bucks with 27 points.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

Compiled by L. Manguiat

SPORTS

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Pacquiao arrives tomorrow

Manila to roll out red carpet for boxing hero; Muhammad readies protest

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

HIS reputation intact following a slambang split draw with WBA and IBF featherweight champ Juan Manuel Marquez Sunday in Las Vegas, Nevada, Manny Pacquiao returns to a hero's welcome in Manila tomorrow still smarting from what he believes is a ringside robbery.

Pacquiao, insisting he was denied of victory in the championship clash, flies home on a Philippine Airlines flight from San Francisco still a hero among his 83 million countrymen.

Fight pundits in Las Vegas and majority of the standing-room-only crowd at the MGM Grand Arena, where the year's most stirring fight was held, believed Pacquiao got the raw end of the deal from at least one of the fight judges.

Yesterday, his American promoter, Murad Muhammad, prepared a formal protest before the Nevada State Athletic Commission as well as the World Boxing Association and the International Boxing Federation, which both sanctioned the bout.

Muhammad said there were three grounds for the protest: the first-round scoring error admitted by judge Burt Clements, the long count administered by referee Joe Cortez when Marquez hit the canvas for the third time in the first round, and the failure of Cortez to deduct a point from Marquez, who received six warnings during the bout due to low blows.

Meanwhile, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza said he will roll out the red carpet for the fighter when he arrives tomorrow. He said he will accompany Pacquiao, whom he considers a surrogate son, to Malacañang Palace for an audience with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Atienza himself will lead the welcome party at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport for the featherweight acknowledged as the world's finest. *With Inquirer wires*

Suico eyes Morales tiff in SA fight

ORIENTAL and Pacific Boxing Federation (OPBF) super featherweight champ Randy Suico seeks to follow in Manny Pacquiao's footsteps when he battles Mzonke Fana in a WBC elimination fight in South Africa this month.

Suico, still undefeated in 21 fights with 18 knockouts, takes on the World Boxing Council's No. 1 contender in the mandatory fight, the winner of which earns the right to challenge flashy WBC titleholder Erik Morales.

The Suico-Fana 12-rounder will be held at the Orlando Community Hall in Soweto, South Africa.

The Filipino has been undergoing extensive training since May 4 at the Teiken Gym in Japan of Akihiko Honda, one of Asia's most influential promoters.

Suico and his small entourage, including Japanese manager Joe Koizumi, are slated to fly to South Africa on May 18.

"I am going all-out for this fight because I'm fighting on foreign territory," said Suico in a recent interview at the ALA Gym in Cebu.

Suico is currently ranked No. 2 by the WBC, a rung behind Fana who boasts a 21-2 win-loss record with 8 KOs.

Suico defended his OPBF crown on Jan. 30, stopping South Korean Baek Seung Won in the second round at the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel. *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*

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RINGTONE: N2
POLYTONE: T2
WALLPAPER: FREE***
LYRICS: LY2

Breathe Easy
Blue
Guilty
RINGTONE: N3
POLYTONE: T3
WALLPAPER: C3
LYRICS: LY3

I Don't Wanna Think About You
Simple Plan
Scooby-Doo 2 OST
RINGTONE: N4
POLYTONE: T4
WALLPAPER: C4
LYRICS: LY4

Bakit Hindi Na Lang Ikaw
Piolo Pascual
My Gift
RINGTONE: N5
POLYTONE: T5
WALLPAPER: C5
LYRICS: LY5

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Southborder
Crying Ladies OST
RINGTONE: N6
POLYTONE: T6
WALLPAPER: C6
LYRICS: LY6

Kung Mahal Mo Siya
Jay-R
Game Face
RINGTONE: N7
POLYTONE: T7
WALLPAPER: C7
LYRICS: LY7

I Melt With You
Jason Mraz
50 Frist Dates Soundtrack
RINGTONE: N8
POLYTONE: T8
WALLPAPER: C8
LYRICS: LY8

Through The Wire
Kanye West
College Dropout
RINGTONE: N9
POLYTONE: T9
WALLPAPER: C9
LYRICS: LY9

Naughty Girl
Beyonce Knowles
Dangerously In Love
RINGTONE: N10
POLYTONE: T10
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Tañamor guns for Olympic berth vs tough Uzbek

KARACHI, Pakistan—Light flyweight Harry Tañamor carries the Philippines' last hopes for another berth in the Athens Olympics when he battles an impressive Uzbek pug in the semifinals of the 3rd Asian Olympic qualifying boxing tournament (Green Hill Cup) at the KPT Sports Complex here.

A pumped-up Tañamor of the RP-Alaxan FR team, no doubt inspired by Manny Pacquiao's gritty form in Las Vegas three days ago, shoots for the 48-kg finals against Namajonov Otabek.

It has been one impressive ride in the weeklong, 29-nation meet for the 25-year-old Tañamor. The pride of Zamboanga City won his first two bouts via Referee Stopped Contest Outscored (RSC-OS), the second of which came Sunday at the expense of tough and stocky Abdraimov Nurlan of Kazakhstan.

"*Gagawin po natin lahat para manalo* (I will do everything to win)," said Tañamor, the only remnant of the four-fighter RP squad, whose stint here is bankrolled by Alaxan FR, the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), Pacific Heights and Accel.

Lightweight Jennibert Basadre became the third Filipino to bow out of the competition when he lost to Malaysia's Adnan Yusoh in a quarterfinal mismatch Sunday, 24-15.

Flyweight Violito Payla and featherweight Junard Ladon failed to make it to the quarterfinals, losing to their Thai and Japanese foes in the preliminaries.

Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (Abap) president Manny Lopez said Tañamor's victory will be a triumph for the rest of the Filipino contingent here.

"We are all praying that Harry succeeds," said the Abap chief.

PSC chair Eric Buhain also sent encouraging words to the Filipino pug on the eve of the bout: "Our prayers for Harry in his bid for an Olympic berth. We have faith in you. Go for the gold and good luck."

Tañamor failed in his two previous bids to pre-qualify for the Olympics. He reached the quarterfinals of the Palawan tournament in January then got eliminated in the first round of the Guangzhou, China, tournament two months later.

"*Laban na po ito. Huling tyansa na* (I'll fight. This is my last chance," he said.

Coaches George Caliwan and Pat Gaspi are not taking chances.

"*Huwag lang magkumpiyansa at maging maganda at patas lang ang* judging, *malaki ang pag-asa natin*," said Caliwan.

Beermen, Aces in crucial tiff

SAN Miguel Beer tries to get a firmer grip of the top seeding when it tackles Alaska today in the Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

Sporting a league-leading 12-2 record, the high-flying Beermen already are a cinch for one of the top two quarterfinal berths going to the 4:45 p.m. match with the Aces.

The Aces, who fell to the resurgent Sta. Lucia Realtors last week, are neck-and-neck with the Coca-Cola Tigers in the battle for the coveted No. 2 ranking. The two teams tote identical 9-5 slates.

The Beermen are also coming off a shocker, bowing to a spirited Talk 'N Text crew last Friday in Lucena City.

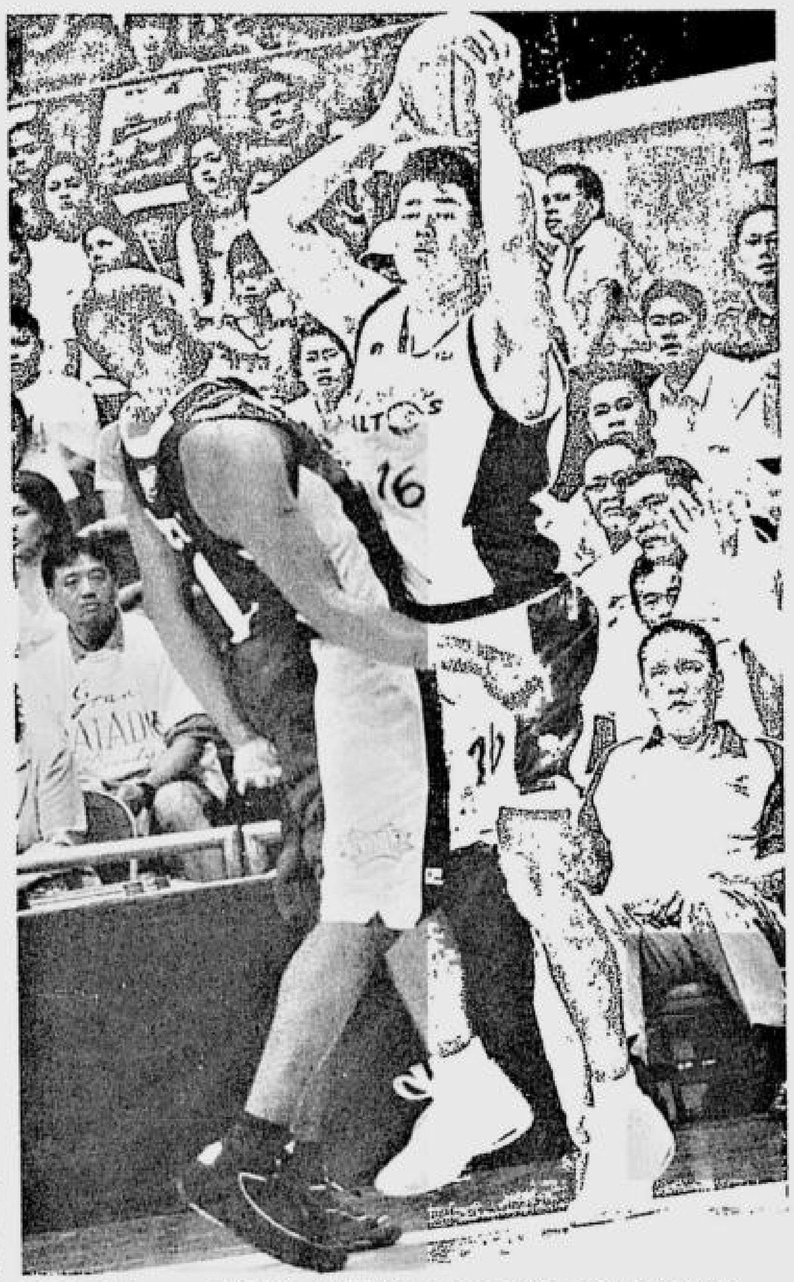
But in a surprising turn, the Phone Pals squandered its hard-earned gains the next time out by getting beaten by the Realtors —easily the hottest in the league with three victories in their last three games, and seven of its last 10.

This time, the Realtors set out as slight favorites when they battle the Barangay Ginebra Gin Kings in the 6:30 p.m. second game.

Derrick Brown is expected to get full firepower support from the local crew as the Realtors, who started the conference with five straight defeats, try to breathe down the necks of the leaders. *June Navarro*

STANDINGS	W	L
SMB	12	2
Alaska	9	5
Coca-Cola	9	5
Talk 'N Text	8	7
Red Bull	7	7
Sta. Lucia	7	8
Ginebra	6	8
Shell	6	9
FedEx	4	10
Purefoods	4	11

GAMES TODAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
4:45 p.m.—San Miguel vs Alaska
7:10 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Ginebra



JERALD Honeycutt (left) of Talk 'N Text uses his body to block the path of Sta. Lucia Realty's Dennis Espino. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

NCAA legend to lead UAAP

By Trina Ibarle

BARRING any major hitch, Coach Ato Badolato, the most revered figure in NCAA high school basketball, will replace Joe Lipa as commissioner of the 67th UAAP basketball season.

Badolato has accepted the post offered to him by La Salle athletic moderator and UAAP president Danny Jose last February.

La Salle, this year's host, has the right to choose the basketball commissioner with the concurrence of the UAAP board.

"Although it has to be approved by the board, I already told La Salle I would accept the position," said Badolato.

Jose said Badolato served well as commissioner in 1996 when La Salle last hosted the tournament. "He (Badolato) did a very good job then, and I expect him to do a very good job again," Jose said.

Provincial entries bloat Starmall youth chess field

HUNDREDS of provincial entries are signing up for the National Age Group Chess Championships, guaranteeing nationwide participation in the meet set March 21-25 at the Starmall in Mandaluyong City.

Young woodpushers from Cebu, Davao, Bohol, Aklan, Negros Occidental and Oriental, Olongapo, Bulacan, Baguio, and Ilocos have indicated they are joining the tournament organized and sanctioned by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines.

This was confirmed yesterday by Rod Suaco, who was appointed by the NCFP leadership as project director of the National Age Group, National Junior and National Championships.

Suaco also stressed that he had not resigned as project director of the competitions, although he said he was not feeling well lately.

On doctor's orders, Suaco said, he is taking a brief rest and has asked NCFP executive director Casto Abundo to continue his work.

Nelson Mariano Sr., father of age group sensation Nelson Mariano III, has called for a boycott of the rival National Age Group tournament organized by NCFP secretary general Sammy Estimo and Grandmaster Eugene Torre.

Joining Mariano in his protest are Diosdado Fronda and Sheryl Kua, the father and elder sister, respectively, of Jan Jodilyn and Sherily, who together with Nelson III, were members of the RP team that represented the Philippines in the 2003 World Youth Chess Championship in Halkidiki, Greece.

All three, as well as the other players to the world event, did not receive allowances despite the fact that the Philippine Sports Commission and the First Gentleman's Foundation gave the funds that Estimo received on behalf of the NCFP.

SPORTSWATCH

Springboard hosts Live Match

THE SPRINGBOARD Foundation headed by chair John Milne and president Annette Helbig is hosting Live Match on May 21 at the Fort's NBC Tent with needy Filipino children and families as beneficiaries. The black-tie event will feature live boxing, including a title fight, auction of world-class sports memorabilia as well as song and dance numbers plus dinner prepared by Le Souffle. The major sponsors are San Miguel Beer, Ford, Gillette, Jardine Schindler, Circulan Macroxam and Lufthansa Cargo. Other backers are Smart Communications, Le Souffle, Cantada Sports Center, HMR Group of Companies, Lane Moving and Storage, Business Profiles, MCA Virtual Phils., New World Renaissance Hotel-Makati, Scan Asia, IMG, Hope/Winston, NBC, DHL, Intera Dent, Zen Asia Inc., Spectrum Security Services, Leighton, Flour, PS Print, Haagen Dazs, Carepak, Addict, Campbell Alexander, Illington, Global Distribution, Golden Tokyo Int'l Entertainment Agency, CMC di Ravenna (Asia) Inc. and La Flor de Isabela. Centerpiece of the fight card is Rodel Mayol's Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation miniflyweight title defense against Ernesto Rubillar. Former world champion Gerry Peñalosa will fight Robert Dalisay in a four-round exhibition. Boxing promoter Edgardo "Boy" Cantada is organizing the fights. Interesting items from Tiger Woods, Michael Jordan, Muhammad Ali, Pele, Ronaldo, Steve Nash, James Blake and other sporting icons will be auctioned. Part of the proceeds of Live Match will go to the Batang Pinangga Foundation in Cebu and the Angeles Bahay Bata Center, which is being supported by Live Match international referee Bruce McTavis. Pops Fernandez will perform. For details, call 0920-9103533.

Maverick vs Crimson Saturday

THE BREN Guiao Convention Center in San Fernando, Pampanga, will be th site of the 2004 Philippine Pro-Boxing League National Invitational Junior Bantamweight Championship pitting Eric "The Maverick" Barcelona and Sherwin "The Crimson" Paro on Saturday. Barcelona, the RP junior bantamweight champion, disposed the cat-quick Mark Sales in the semifinal round by unanimous decision while Paro, rated RP No. 2, won convincingly against Roselito Campaña to advance in the championship round of this tourney supported by Tanduay Rhum and Lactovitale. The event will also feature the return of the PPBL junior flyweight division led by defending champion Eugene "Machine Gun" Gonzales and current WBC international minimum weight champion Armand "The Arsenal" dela Cruz. For ticket inquiries, call Casino Filipino-Angeles at 045-8925073 also at (045) 9000428 09164131436 or go to the nearest PPBL ticket outlet.

U-Ha Girls Futbol Club wins

A YOUNG U-Ha Girls Futbol Club defeated the Hed Center girls, 2-0, recently and made its presence felt in the Metropolitan Summer Football League in Barangay Sta. Elena, Marikina City. Strikers Pia and Kaira hit the back of the net for the teenage team whose homebase is the Southville International School in BF Homes, Parañaque. U-Ha debuted with a scoreless draw against Miriam College. In other matches, Cuenca downed Alabang FC, 1-0, and Colegio San Agustin won over Miriam, 1-0. Other clubs and teams in the single-round league include the Laguna Football Club, Nomads, Pasay and Boys Town FC.

SM Davao taekwondo lures 300 jins

SOME 300 jins will showcase their skills and talent when they clash for top honors in various divisions in Samsung's Best-of-the-Best taekwondo championships this weekend (May 15-16) at SM Davao. The tournament, put up by the sponsoring Samsung as part of its commitment to discover, tap and develop talents from the countryside, has attracted bets from the provinces of Mindanao. Berths in the national finals set later this year at Glorietta, Makati, are at stake in the tournament held under the auspices of the Philippine Taekwondo Association. A total of 48 winners will be known Sunday, including 16 (8 men, 8 ladies) in the centerpiece seniors' event exclusive to players aged 18 years old and above. The Davao tilt is the last of two regional championships organized by the International Management Group, the first was held in Cebu last month

Roligon derby stakes P.45M

A JACKPOT prize of P450,000 is at stake in Roligon Mega Cockpit's "S/S 4-Cock Derby" this Saturday. Sponsors are Casino Filipino-Parañaque and Thunderbird Platinum. Roligon owner and derby host Rolly Ligon said the prize is guaranteed. With more than 80 confirmed entries (equivalent to 160 fights), the derby will start at noon. Entry fee is P6,600 while minimum bet is P4,400. The fastest kill champion will get P30,000 and second fastest kill P20,000. Submission of entries is on Friday only, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. For inquiries, contact 8332275, 8331638, 8529812 and 8529774. Meanwhile, the "Diamante 5-Cock Derby" of popular breeder Erwin Diamante unfolds on M 22, 24 and 26. The guaranteed prize is P1 million with an P8,800 pot money

Cockfighting resumes at LPC

AFTER a four-day break, cockfighting action resumes tonight at the air-conditioned Las Piñas Coliseum with the staging of another 3-cock derby to be sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. To be hosted by Pasay cocker Arman Garcia, the derby dangles a cash prize of P300,000 with a P6,600 entry fee. Garcia said more than 50 fights are scheduled tonight. Entries must be submitted until 2 p.m. today. For inquiries, contact 8731040 (look for Ger or Julius). Other 3-cock derbies are scheduled on May 15 (Toto Hernan), May 19 (Nonoy and Orly Mendoza); May 22 (Yoyoy Mananari) and May 29 Meanwhile, hackfights are scheduled from Monday to Sunday.

World Slasher taps Thunderbird feeds

UNIPROM Inc.—organizers of the 2004 World Slasher Cup II International 8-Cock Derby—has again tapped Thunderbird Power Feeds/Univet as exclusive sponsor. Marketing director Ed Mapanao and product manager Dante Nacar signed the agreement for the gamefowl health and nutrition industry leader, while Bobby Roca represented Uniprom. Unilab-owned Thunderbird, which is synonymous to modern and scientific gamefowl care, is also the signature entry name of World Slasher Cup founder Jorge "Nene" Araneta—considered as one of the pillars of Philippine cockfighting. Set on June 15, 17 & 19 at the Araneta Coliseum, the event is the second of two World Slasher events held every year. The first, held in January, was topped by former PBA commissioner lawyer Rudy Salud.

AVIA-NBA CHEERLEADERS
Leading performance-footwear Avia-USA recently sponsored the NBA cheerleaders headed by Jason Bass of the New Jersey Nets and Giselle Fabricante of NBA Entertainment who graced the National Cheerleading camp for college, high school and grade school students at The Fort. A brainchild of Eventus, the event is part of Avia's advocacy of promoting sports for fitness.

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Race 2—1. Art of Rose 2. Hyperbid 3. L'Islet Sur Mer 4. Mr. Puao

Race 3—1. Cool Air 2. Boiling Point 3. Playing Cool 4. Bashful Lady 5. Simply Content

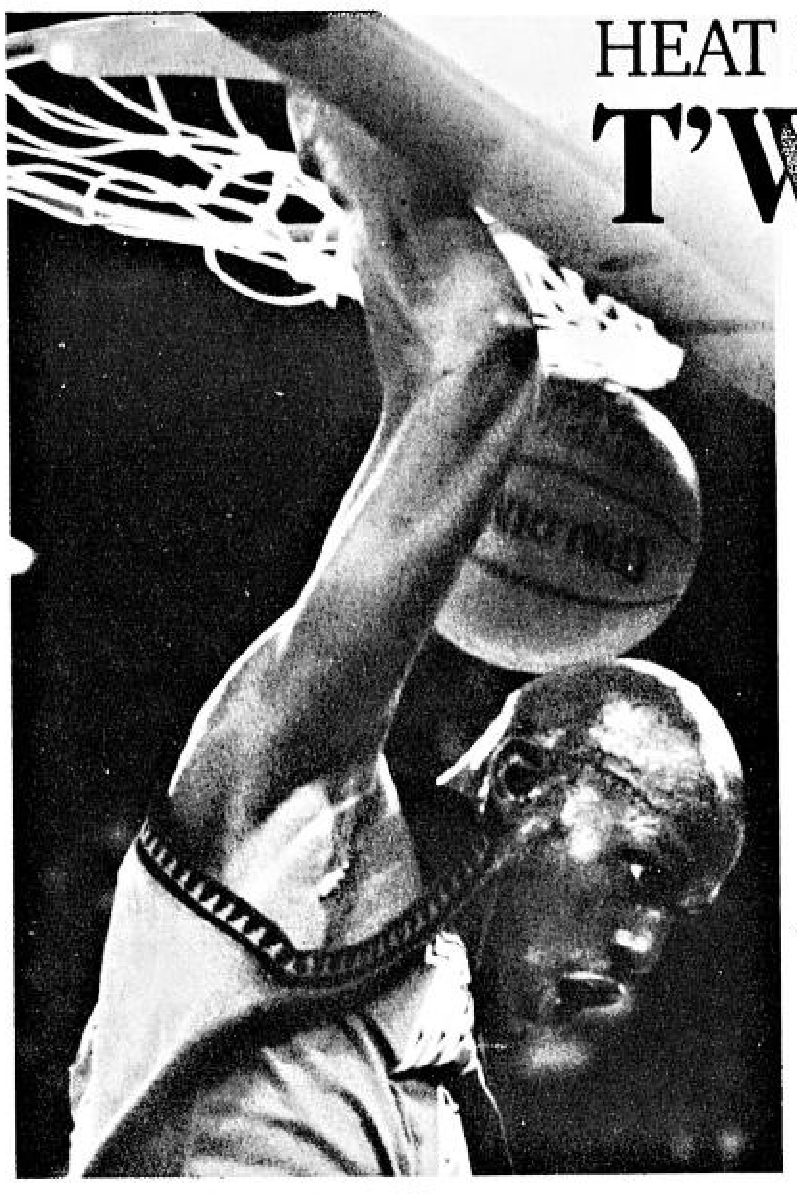
Race 4—1. I Love This Game 2. Winter's Firy 3. Patikim

Race 5—1. G Square 2. Bring Home D Bacon 3. Power and Might 4. Classy Babe 5. Friendly Lover

Race 6—1. Flying Jordan 2. Crystal City 3. The Dominator 4. Hurricane Doding 5. Friendly Venture

Race 7—1. Super Magic 2. Magical Charm 3. Renzie Stays 4. Rose and Toy 5. Yours Truly

Race 8—1. Material Trick 2. Angel Eyes 3. Run Doding Fly 4.Colonial Affair/En Carta 5. Daytona 6. Carlo's Charm



GARNETT slam-dunks against the Kings. REUTERS

HEAT COOL PACERS

T'Wolves thwart Kings

SACRAMENTO, Calif.— Kevin Garnett scored 30 points in the fourth quarter and overtime, including a fallaway jumper to beat the shot clock with 10.9 seconds left, in the Minnesota Timberwolves' 114-113 victory over the Kings in Game 3 of their second-round playoff series Monday night.

With several clutch baskets, Garnett saved Minnesota from a disheartening loss and reclaimed home court advantage in the series. When Peja Stojakovic's final shot fell short, Garnett also led the Timberwolves' joyous charge off the court.

With their third win this season at Arco Arena, the Timberwolves took a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven series. Game 4 is Wednesday night in Sacramento.

Led by a sensational game from Stojakovic, who scored 22 of his 29 points after the third quarter, the Kings erased a 14-point deficit in the final four minutes of regulation, then forced OT by swarming Garnett at the buzzer. The comeback even bested Minnesota's rally from a 10-point deficit in Game 2.

Earlier in Miami, the Miami Heat handed Indiana its first loss of the postseason, beating the Pacers, 94-87, Monday night to trail Indiana, 2-1, in their best-of-seven series.

Dwyane Wade scored 25 points, including 14 in the fourth quarter, and Lamar Odom added 16 points for the Heat, who extended their home winning streak to 17 games.

Game 4 is Wednesday night in Miami, where the Heat haven't lost since March 2.

The home-court helped Miami beat the Pacers for the first time in 12 tries. This one was close until the end.

The Heat used a 7-0 run to take a 79-72 lead with 2:55 to play. Wade hit a pull-up jumper at the foul line, then dunked over Jermaine O'Neal. *AP*

Jordan to go on 4-city Asian tour

BEAVERTON, Oregon—Basketball legend Michael Jordan will make a four-city tour of Asia next week, speaking with youth as well as dignitaries during basketball events and exhibitions.

Jordan, who guided the Chicago Bulls to six National Basketball Association titles, will begin his Asian tour May 19-20 at Beijing, visit Hong Kong on May 21 and Taipei on May 22 before finishing his tour May 23 in Tokyo.

In addition to promoting his clothing line to retailers, Jordan will speak to youth about his dedication to excellence and the importance of hard work and determination throughout his career, on and off the court.

"If you aspire to excellence in everything you do, the sky is the limit," Jordan said in a news release. "Basketball has taught me valuable life skills that have carried over to endeavors on and off the court." *AFP*

Patrimonios sail past first round

PATRIMONIO siblings Angelo and Christine won their opening-round matches yesterday in the Philta Classic 3 Age Group Championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Angelo, the eldest among three children of four-time PBA MVP Alvin, beat Ryan Daza, 7-6 (3), 6-0, and advanced against third seed Miguel Antonio Pantua in the boys' 18-under division.

Christine, seeded third in the girls' 14-under, defeated Joan Therese Opulencia, 6-4, 6-2, to forge a second-round meeting with Laurice Francisco, who survived JV Custodio, 7-6 (1), 6-1. Joining Christine in the next round are No. 2 Zhane Quitara, No. 4 Jecille Ortellano, No. 5 Juzenne Mendoza, No. 7 Katherine Ortega, 6-2, 6-3, and Mary Ribaya. Other first-round winners in the boys' 18-under were No. 8 Julian Lagman, Arthur Tafalla, Mark Katindig, Ronel Enilo, Juv Alban and Christian Canlas.

In the boys' 16-under, top seed Patrick Arevalo downed Joseph Baldonado, 6-2, 6-4, second seed Gerard Michael Ngo rallied past Tomic Apacible, 2-6, 6-0, 6-1, and No. 3 Mark Balce defeated Fredmore Dominisac, 6-2, 6-0.

RP should bid for World Pool tourney

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

BECAUSE it has built a reputation of producing champion pool players and hosting highly successful international billiards tournaments in the recent past, the legions of Filipino sports fans want the Philippines to bid for the prestigious World Pool Championship.

According to them, it would be a golden opportunity for the government to stage the World Pool Championship here because it would not only boost the country's tourism industry, but also take away the world's attention from the present crises that beset us.

On the proposed pool blockbuster, the key undoubtedly is the Puyat brothers—Popit and Putch—the moving spirit behind Puyat Sports, a nonprofit organization which is mainly responsible for the enormous progress of billiards in the Philippines. Popit and Putch can provide the groundwork for this bold new project because of their close contact with international promoters and world-class pool players.

Of course, ideal supporters of this pioneering project are cash-rich government agencies such as the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and the Department of Tourism and private firms, including San Miguel Corp., Coca-Cola Bottlers and Photokina Marketing, Philippine distributor of Red Bull energy drink, Café Barako and Agfacolor film.

Taiwan will be staging this year's World Pool Championship on July 10-18, featuring 1999 champion Efren "Bata" Reyes, the most-written about player in Philippine billiards history. Reyes, who will be 50 years old on Aug. 26, won the fourth leg of this San Miguel Asian Tour in Taiwan recently. It was his third victory in the five-leg series after earlier winning in Singapore and Vietnam. The fifth and final leg of the Asian Tour will be held in Manila on May 29-30, with the expected participation of Frennie Reyes, 20-year-old son of Efren.

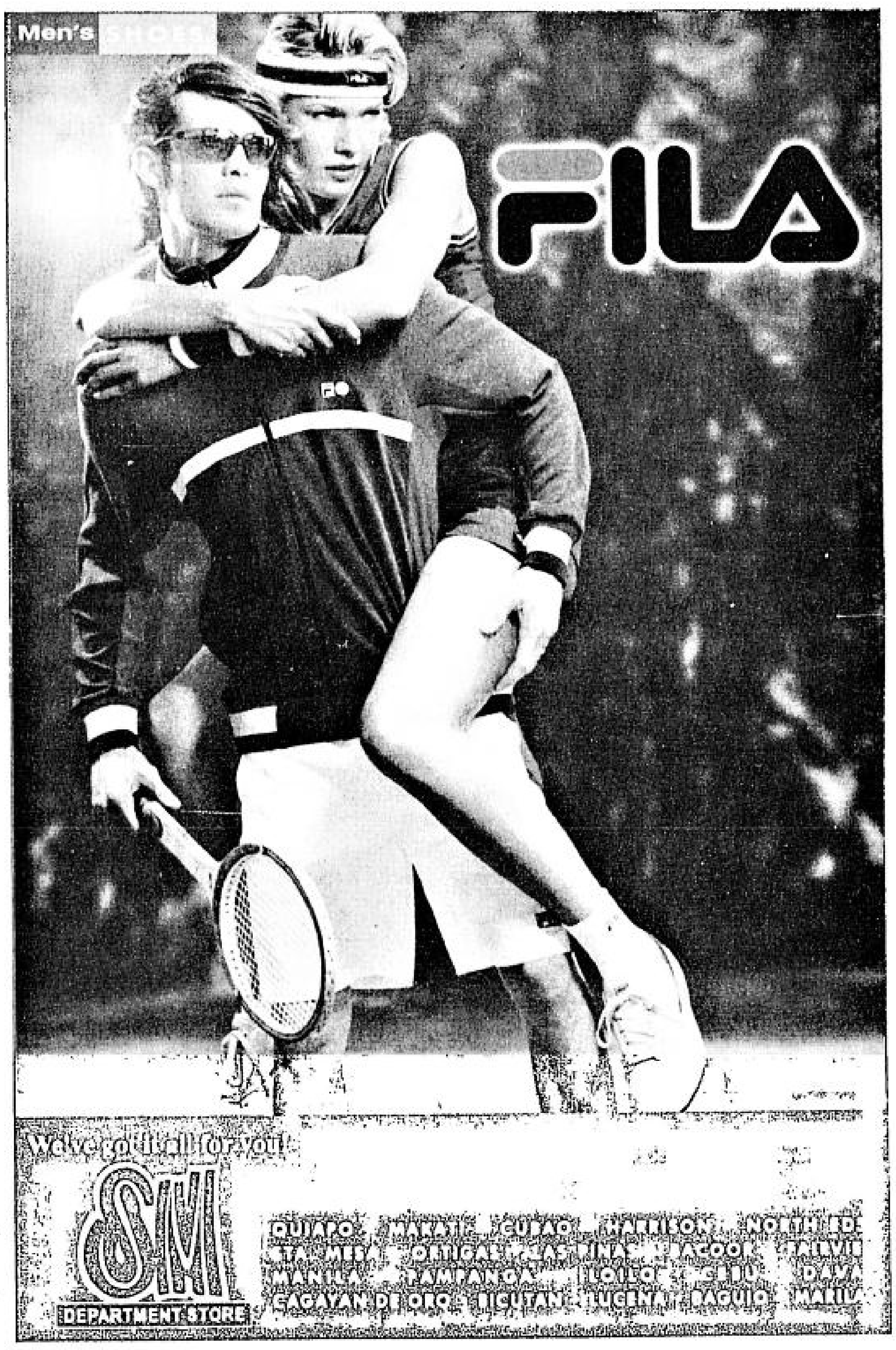
A computer science student at the Holy Angel College in Angeles City, Frennie saw action at the opening leg of the Asian Tour in Singapore last February but he failed to make an impact being new in the game. He held his first cue only three years ago.

***

FEU DID US PROUD. Far Eastern University's rampaging Tamaraws did the country proud last week by sweeping the University of Guam Endowment Foundation International Friendship Basketball Championship at the University of Guam Fieldhouse. Team manager Anton Montinola said this is the first time the FEU basketball team represented the Philippines in an international competition and played not just for the school but for the country as well, including the thousands of Filipinos in Guam who overwhelmingly supported the team. It was mission accomplished for multititled coach Koy Banal and the Tamaraws: An international basketball championship to go alongside last year's UAAP title.

FEU defeated in succession Daito Bungka University of Japan, 98-61, Korea University, 73-68, Guam National Team; and Japan's Daito Bungka, 80-60, in the title showdown.

Sweet-shooting Tamaraw Mark Isip was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player while teammate Arwind Santos joined him in the Mythical Five. Gerard Jones and Don Yabut also shone in the series, providing the valuable support act.



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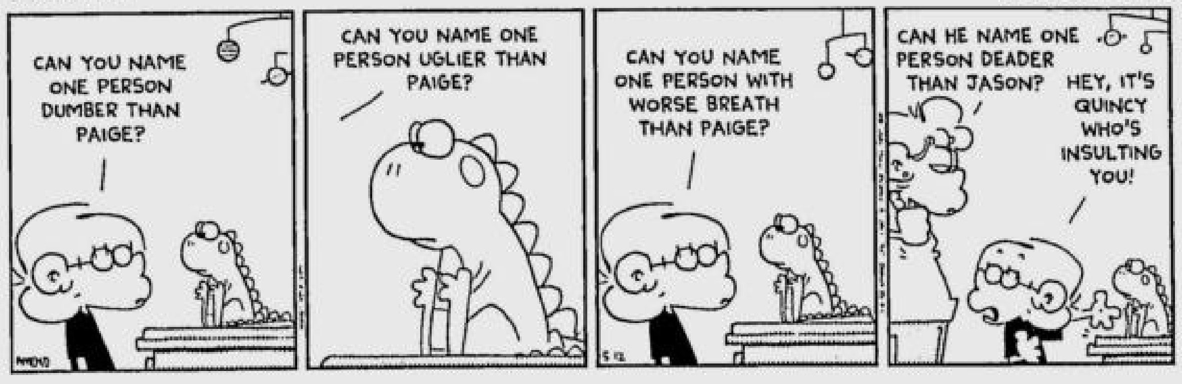
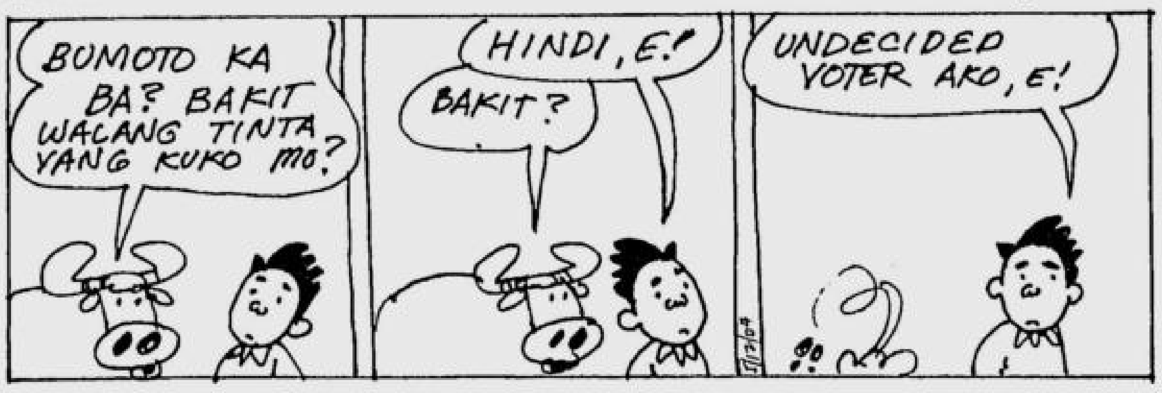
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


CAN YOU NAME ONE PERSON DUMBER THAN PAIGE?
CAN YOU NAME ONE PERSON UGLIER THAN PAIGE?
CAN YOU NAME ONE PERSON WITH WORSE BREATH THAN PAIGE?
CAN HE NAME ONE PERSON DEADER THAN JASON?
HEY, IT'S QUINCY WHO'S INSULTING YOU!
AMEND
5-12

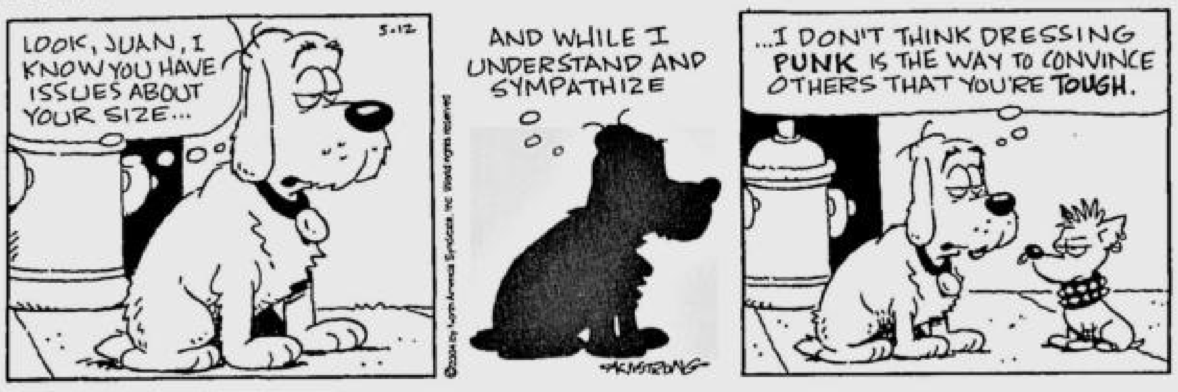
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


BUMOTO KA BA? BAKIT WALANG TINTA YANG KUKO MO?
BAKIT?
HINDI, E!
UNDECIDED VOTER AKO, E!

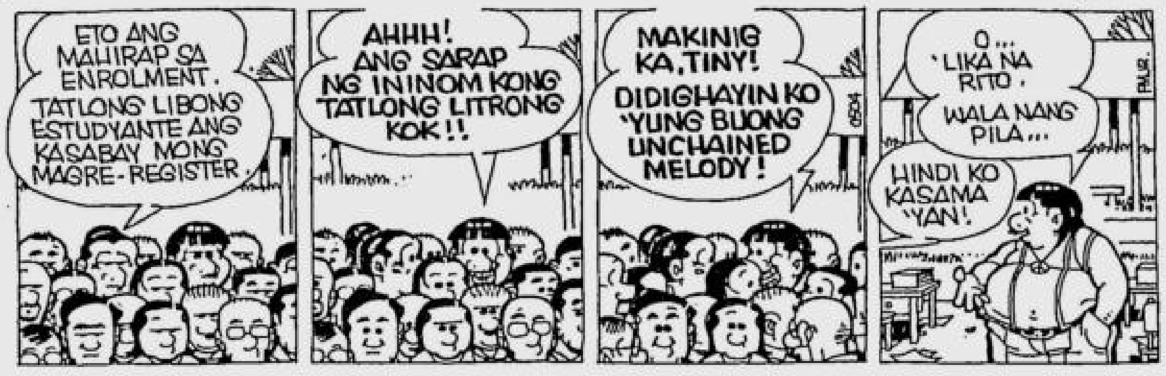
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


LOOK, JUAN, I KNOW YOU HAVE ISSUES ABOUT YOUR SIZE...
5-12
AND WHILE I UNDERSTAND AND SYMPATHIZE
...I DON'T THINK DRESSING PUNK IS THE WAY TO CONVINCE OTHERS THAT YOU'RE TOUGH.
ARMSTRONG

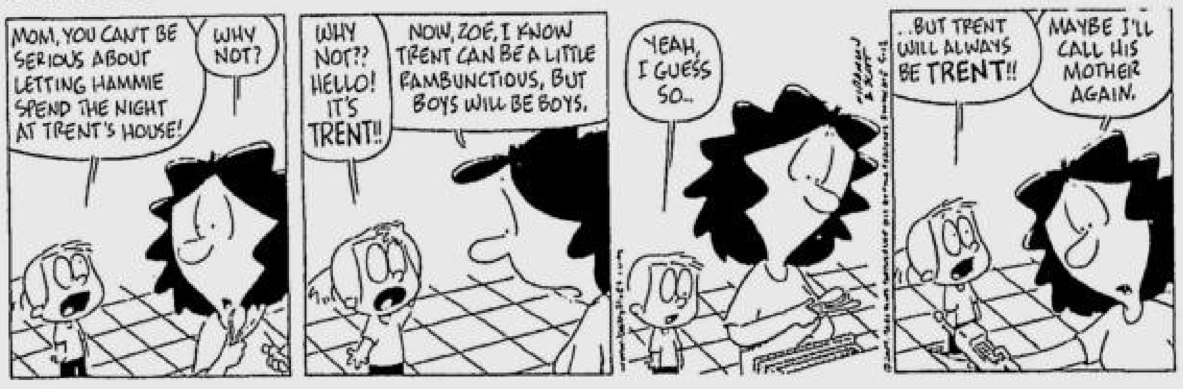
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ETO ANG MAHIRAP SA ENROLMENT. TATLONG LIBONG ESTUDYANTE ANG KASABAY MONG MAGRE-REGISTER.
AHHH! ANG SARAP NG ININOM KONG TATLONG LITRONG KOK!!
MAKINIG KA, TINY! DIDIGHAYIN KO 'YUNG BUONG UNCHAINED MELODY!
O... 'LIKA NA RITO.
WALA NANG PILA...
HINDI KO KASAMA 'YAN!

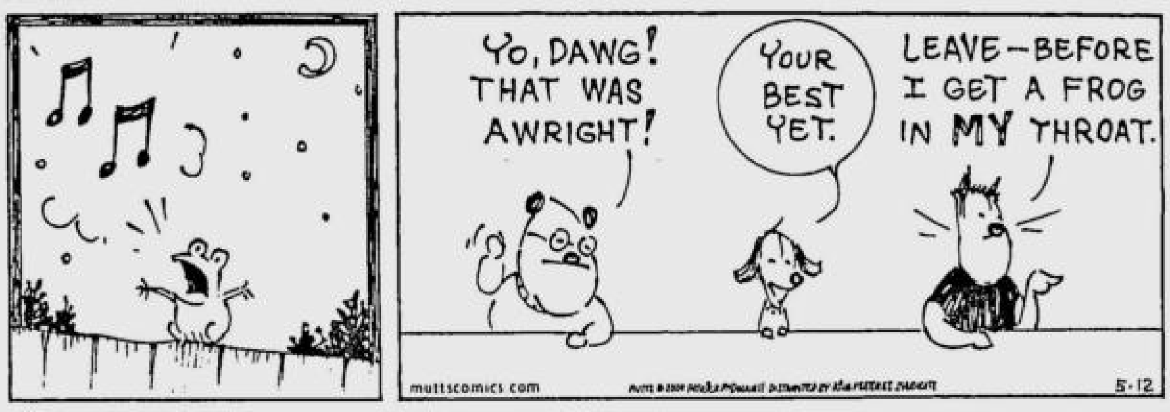
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


MOM, YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS ABOUT LETTING HAMMIE SPEND THE NIGHT AT TRENT'S HOUSE!
WHY NOT?
WHY NOT?? HELLO! IT'S TRENT!!
NOW, ZOE, I KNOW TRENT CAN BE A LITTLE RAMBUNCTIOUS, BUT BOYS WILL BE BOYS.
YEAH, I GUESS SO...
...BUT TRENT WILL ALWAYS BE TRENT!!
MAYBE I'LL CALL HIS MOTHER AGAIN.

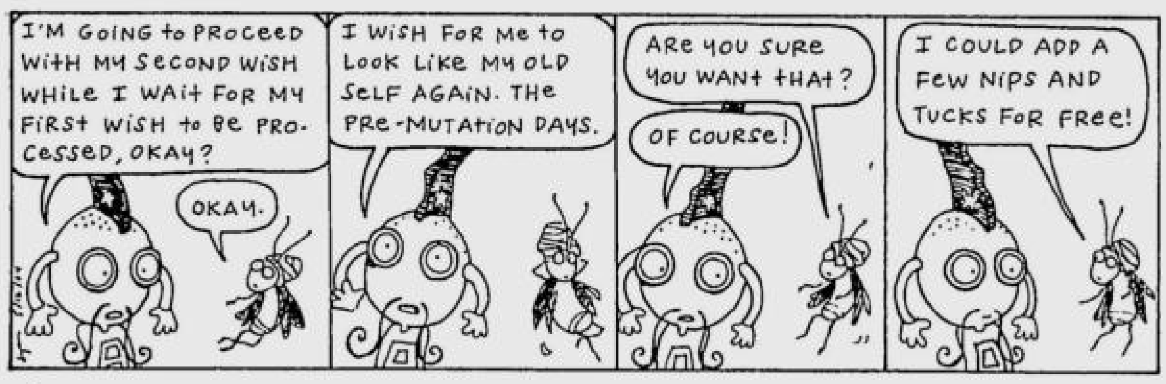
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


YO, DAWG! THAT WAS AWRIGHT!
YOUR BEST YET.
LEAVE—BEFORE I GET A FROG IN MY THROAT.
muttscomics.com
5-12

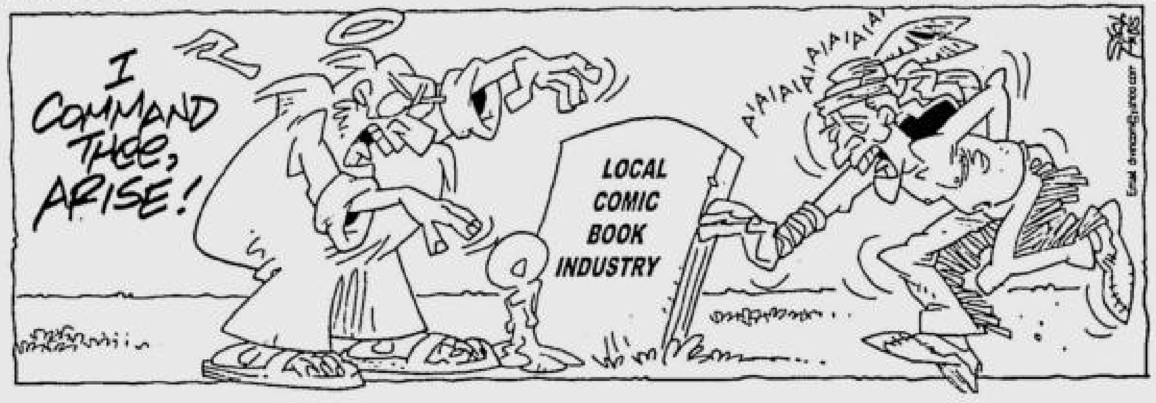
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I'M GOING TO PROCEED WITH MY SECOND WISH WHILE I WAIT FOR MY FIRST WISH TO BE PROCESSED, OKAY?
OKAY.
I WISH FOR ME TO LOOK LIKE MY OLD SELF AGAIN. THE PRE-MUTATION DAYS.
ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT THAT?
OF COURSE!
I COULD ADD A FEW NIPS AND TUCKS FOR FREE!

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


I COMMAND THEE, ARISE!
LOCAL COMIC BOOK INDUSTRY
AIAIAIAIAIAI!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are shrewd, talented and intelligent. You see the irony in life around you. Frequently, you are thrust into the role of leadership, partly because you debunk hypocrisy and falseness wherever you find it. In truth, you are an idealist. The year ahead holds exciting changes for you. Remain flexible. **Birthdate of:** Jason Biggs, actor; George Carlin, comedian; Katharine Hepburn, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Stay alert for job opportunities today. Keep in mind that this is the year you can make great improvements to your employment scene. (Ditto for your health.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You must plan on taking a vacation this year. The stars want you to have fun! Romance, love affairs, pleasurable amusements and sports get a major boost in months ahead.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a wonderful year for real estate for your sign. This also means that family situations and your home in general will expand with joy and increased wealth.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You haven't felt this generally optimistic about your day-to-day life for a long time. Your belief in a positive tomorrow is the main thing that will ensure it.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Most of you are earning more money this year (or you soon will be). In addition to this, your assets have increased. Lucky Jupiter is bringing you wealth!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): No matter what happens to you, you should know that you're quite fortunate this year because lucky Jupiter is in your sign. Even if things are tough, believe me, they could be worse!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Your relations with large institutions, hospitals, prisons and the government have improved and will continue to improve this year. Be confident about this. (And things get even better after September!) Lady Luck is with you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Groups, clubs and associations all want your participation in some way. In fact, this is a highly social year for you. Just accept this fact, and flash your dazzle!

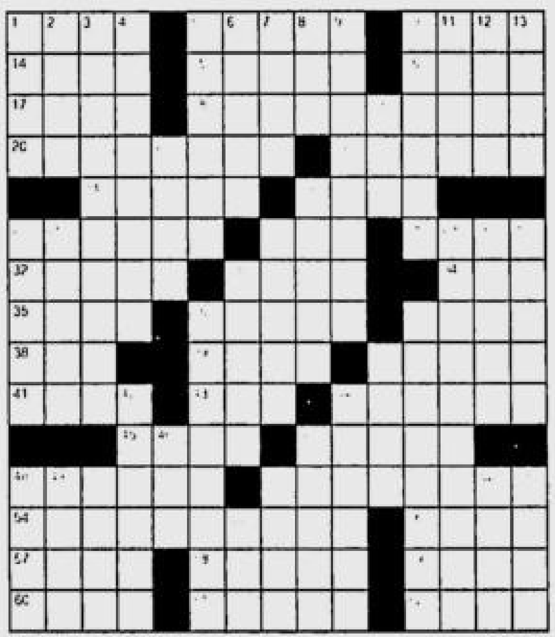
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your career has not been so beautifully favored for more than a decade. Keep this in mind constantly. Do whatever you can to improve your chances to follow your bliss.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is the year for a vacation. It's also the year to promote yourself in publishing, the media, long-distance travel, dealing with other countries and higher education. Go, go, go!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Good luck comes to you from other sources this year. It comes mainly in the form of financial advantages. You stand to benefit from the resources of others. Excellent!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): All your partnerships and closest friendships are beautifully favored now. This simply reflects the warmth you have extended to others. (What goes around comes around.)

DAILY CROSSWORD

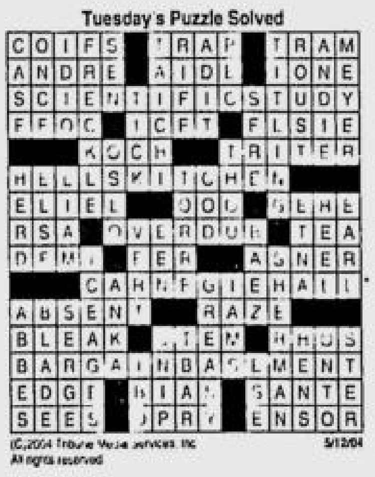


By Eugene R. Puffenberger
Houston, TX
5/12/04

ACROSS
1 Bronze and Iron, e.g.
5 More untested
10 Molecule component
14 Maui feast
15 In a higher place
16 Director Wertmuller
17 Goes wrong
18 Dodger royalty?
20 Guilty parties
22 Shaq and Dr. J
23 Shortstop Wall
24 Depict
25 Foul odor
27 Wrestling feat
28 Dundee lad
32 Wipe out
33 Sally or Ayn
34 Wilder's " Town"
35 Peace advocate
36 Wise ones
37 Oscar winner of 1936
38 Copy
39 In the sack
40 Puerto Rico port
41 Infamous Roman tyrant
43 Exorcise
44 Easy gallop
45 Necklace unit
47 Esau's twin
48 Customer
51 Fermented condiments
54 Naked royalty?
56 On the waves
57 Lotion ingredient
58 Chairman's mallet
59 Weasel's relative
60 Foundry form
61 Pile up
62 Himalayan legend

DOWN
1 One of the Waughs
2 Indian sage
3 Oriole royalty?
4 Hitchcock specialty
5 Root for salads
6 Borders on
7 Moo goo gai pan pans
8 Holiday prelude
9 Countermands
10 Trues up
11 Ocean motion
12 Lollapalooza
13 Red planet
19 SE Asian war, casually
21 Houston school
24 Like notebook paper
25 City on the Meuse
26 Figurative use of a word
27 Beeped
29 Jazz royalty?
30 Piece of a pound
31 Attempter
33 Overzealous
36 Type of trunk
37 One-male state
40 Walk with worry
42 Followed orders
44 Panama and Suez
46 High school subj.
47 Kids verbally
48 Tasty mollusk
49 "Le roi d'Ys" composer
50 Object of worship
51 Long live!
52 Dollars for quarters
53 H.H. Munro
55 Beaver project

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved



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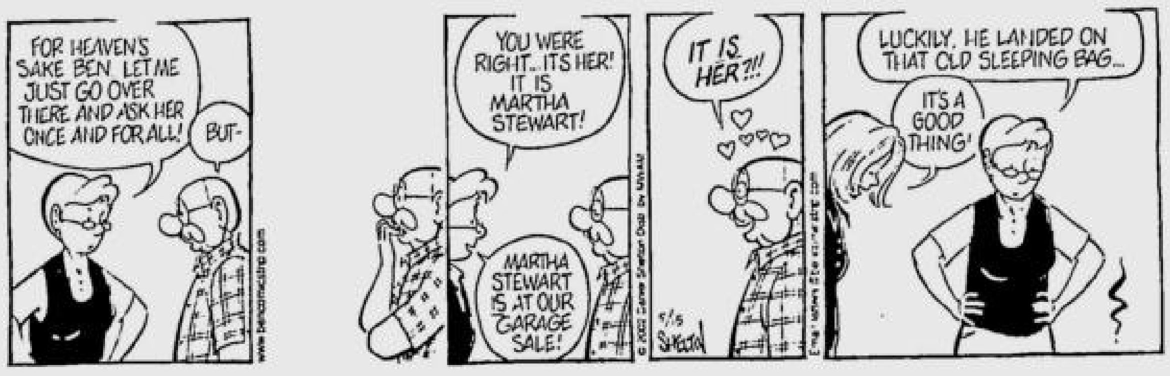
5/12/04

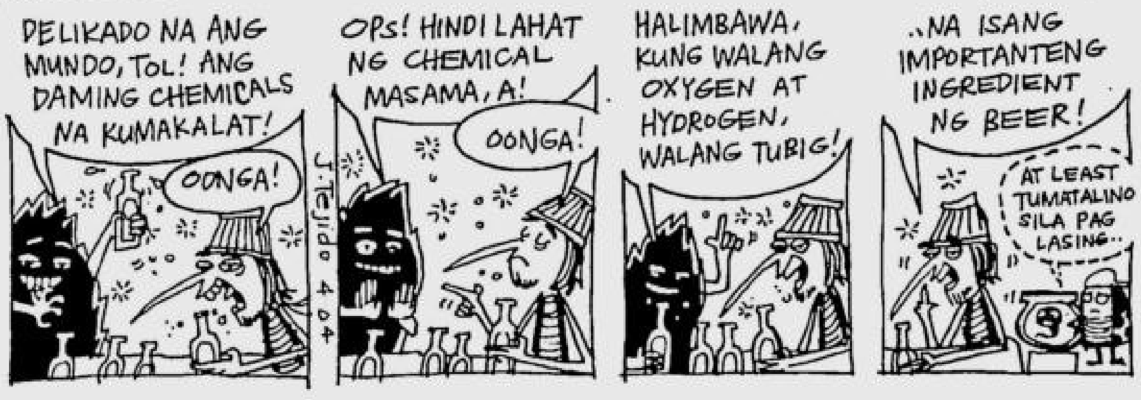
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE BEN LET ME JUST GO OVER THERE AND ASK HER ONCE AND FOR ALL!
BUT-
YOU WERE RIGHT... ITS HER! IT IS MARTHA STEWART!
MARTHA STEWART IS AT OUR GARAGE SALE!
IT IS HER?!!
LUCKILY, HE LANDED ON THAT OLD SLEEPING BAG...
IT'S A GOOD THING!
SHELTON

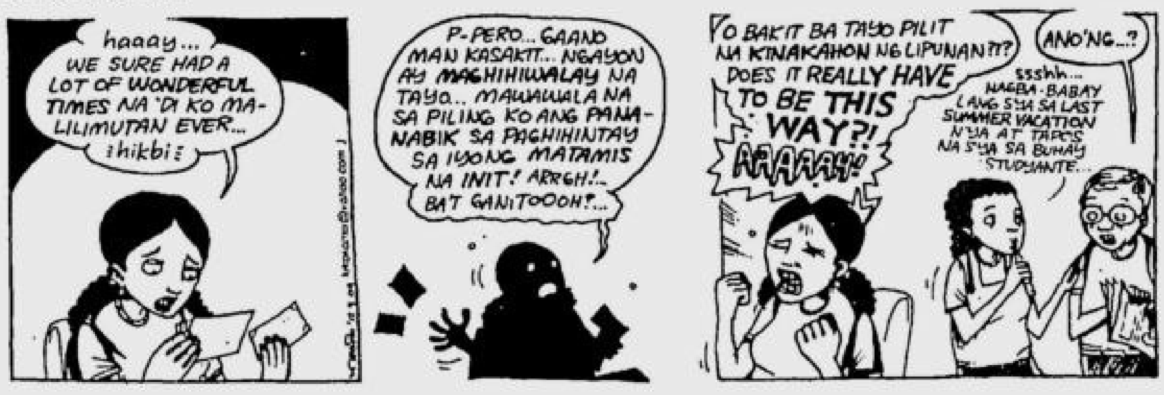
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


DELIKADO NA ANG MUNDO, TOL! ANG DAMING CHEMICALS NA KUMAKALAT!
OONGA!
OPS! HINDI LAHAT NG CHEMICAL MASAMA, A!
OONGA!
J. Tejido 4 04
HALIMBAWA, KUNG WALANG OXYGEN AT HYDROGEN, WALANG TUBIG!
..NA ISANG IMPORTANTENG INGREDIENT NG BEER!
AT LEAST TUMATALINO SILA PAG LASING..

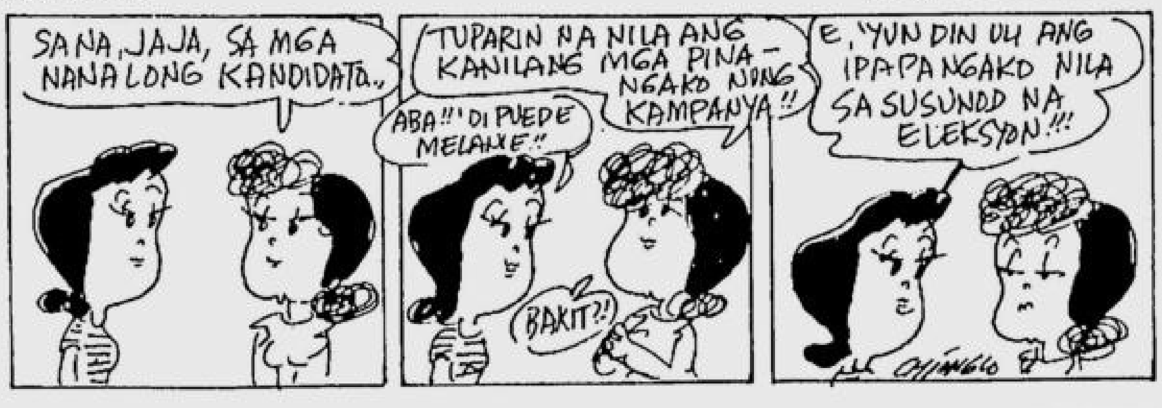
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


haaay... WE SURE HAD A LOT OF WONDERFUL TIMES NA 'DI KO MALILIMUTAN EVER... :hikbi:
P-PERO... GAANO MAN KASAKIT... NGAYON AY MAGHIHIWALAY NA TAYO... MAWAWALA NA SA PILING KO ANG PANANABIK SA PAGHIHINTAY SA IYONG MATAMIS NA INIT! ARRGH!.. BA'T GANITOOOH!?...
O BAKIT BA TAYO PILIT NA KINAKAHON NG LIPUNAN?!? DOES IT REALLY HAVE TO BE THIS WAY?!
AAAAAH!
ANO'NG..?
ssshh... NAGBA-BABAY LANG S'YA SA LAST SUMMER VACATION N'YA AT TAPOS NA S'YA SA BUHAY STUDYANTE...

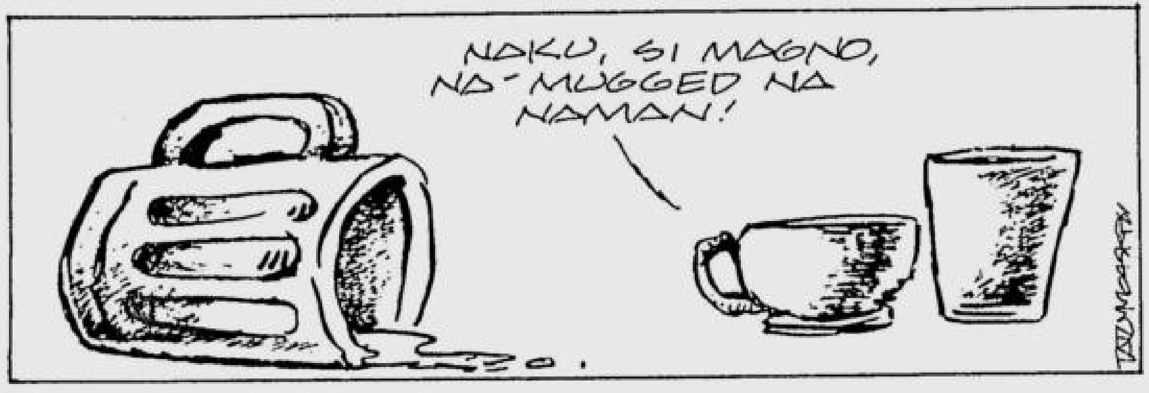
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SANA, JAJA, SA MGA NANALONG KANDIDATO..
TUPARIN NA NILA ANG KANILANG MGA PINANGAKO NONG KAMPANYA!!
ABA!! 'DI PUEDE MELANIE!!
BAKIT?!
E, 'YUN DIN UU ANG IPAPANGAKO NILA SA SUSUNOD NA ELEKSYON!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


NAKU, SI MAGNO, NA-MUGGED NA NAMAN!

'SERBIS ON THE GO!'

Former Channel 4 newscaster and program host Gina de la Vega-Cruz returns to TV in a co-hosting job with Anthony Suntay in "Serbis on the Go," a new public service program produced by Intercontinental Broadcasting Corp. Channel 13, Tuesday and Thursday, 10:30-11 a.m. De la Vega-Cruz, a Broadcast Communication cum laude graduate of the University of the Philippines, is corporate communications director of Berkley International Philippines Inc./ Family First. Suntay finished Marketing from de la Salle University, minor in Communication Arts.

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX

Ali 3	I WILL SURVIVE
Ali 4	VAN HELSING
Ali 5	JERSEY GIRL
Ali 6	CONFESSION... DRAMA QUEEN
Ali 7	HELLBOY

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MAY 23	PBA : SAN MIGUEL VS. FEDEX
MAY 26	PBA : STA LUCIA VS. SHELL
MAY 29	THE SEARCHERS
MAY 30	PBA : RED BULL VS. SAN MIGUEL
JUNE 1	NCA 7-COCK DERBY

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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	KIROT SA DIBDIB
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	KIROT DA DIBDIB
B	CLOSED
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	STARSKY & HUTCH
CINEMA-2	KIROT SA DIBDIB
CINEMA-3	WHOLE 10 YARDS
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	CONFESSION OF DRAMA QUEEN
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MAN ON FIRE
CINEMA-6	MASIKIP SA DIBDIB
CINEMA-7	SEX EDUCATION
CINEMA-8	ANIMAL
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	VAN HELSING
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	VAN HELSING
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	JERSEY GIRL
CINEMA-12	MY WIFE IS A GANGSTER
CINEMA-14	HELLBOY
CINEMA-15	I WILL SURVIVE

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

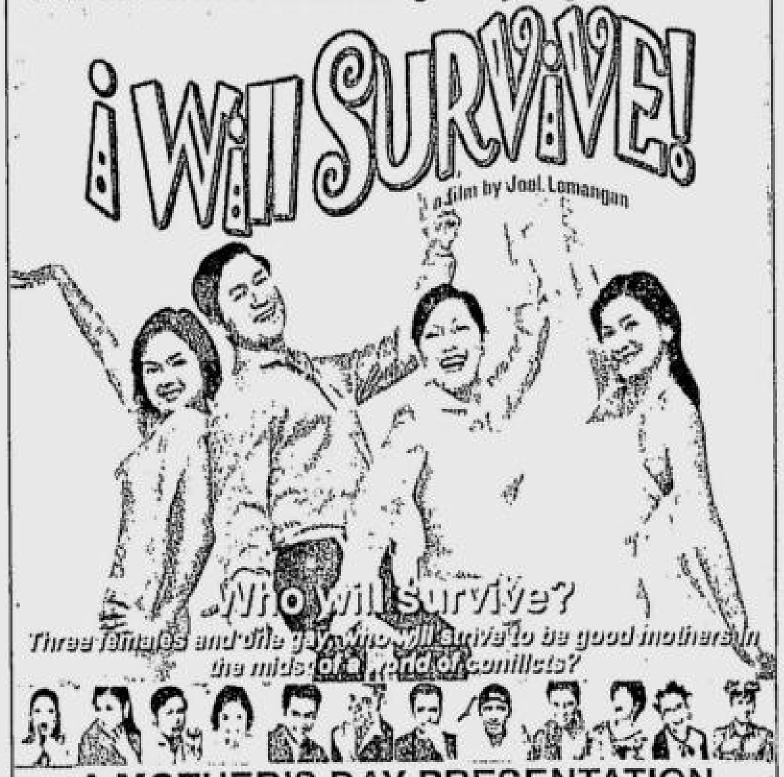
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PIÑAS)	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
CINEMA-1	HOUSE OF THE DEAD
CINEMA-2	HELLBOY
CINEMA-4	STARSKY & HUTCH

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

RATED "B" BY CINEMA EVALUATION BOARD
2ND WEEK
A MOTHER'S DAY PRESENTATION
For a sneak preview of our trailer, log on to www.regal-iwillsurvive.com
Who will survive? Sa drama ng buhay, ang maasar talo!


i Will SURViVE!
a film by Joel Lamangan
Who will survive?
Three females and one gay, who will strive to be good mothers in the midst of a world of conflicts?

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A REGAL ENTERTAINMENT INC. PRESENTATION

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

For inquiries, call:
687-6963 • 687-6972

RESERVED SEATING

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1	**STARSKY & HUTCH** 11:40, 1:50, 4:00 6:10, 8:20, 10:30 PG-13
2	**VAN HELSING** 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20 10:00, 11:00 PG-13
3	**THE CONFESSIONS OF TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN** 11:35, 1:50, 4:05, 6:20 8:35, 10:50 GP
4	**JERSEY GIRL** 11:50, 2:25, 4:55, 7:25, 10:00 PG-13

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

STARSKY AND HUTCH **PG13** 12:50, 3:10, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50	**CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN** **GP** 12:05, 2:00, 3:55, 5:50, 7:45, 9:40	**JERSEY GIRLS** **PG13** 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10
VAN HELSING **PG13** 12:35, 3:15, 5:55, 8:35	**MAN ON FIRE** **R18** 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00	**VAN HELSING** **PG13** 2:20, 5:00, 7:40, 10:20

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

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CINEMA 1	**VAN HELSING** 12:05, 3:00, 5:55, 8:50 **P13**
CINEMA 2	**STARSKY & HUTCH** 12:00, 2:25, 4:50, 7:15, 9:40 **P13**

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
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MAY 13 & 14	'GARY V'	8:00 PM

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MOVIEWORLD
[illegible]

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Family Consumers Choice Award 2003

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2	JERSEY GIRL
3	VAN HELSING
4	CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN
5	MAN ON FIRE
6	SCHOOL OF ROCK
7	STARSKY AND HUTCH
8	I WILL SURVIVE
9	MY WIFE IS A GANGSTER
10	CITY OF GOD

MATINEE: Monday to Friday/ 10 am-4pm except holidays
Matinee Price: P100 THX cinema / P80 for one level cinemas
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3	MY WIFE IS A GANGSTER
4	VAN HELSING
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6	JERSEY GIRL
7	MAN ON FIRE

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3	STARSKY AND HUTCH
4	CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN
5	KIROT SA DIBDIB
6	MY WIFE IS A GANGSTER
7	VAN HELSING
8	I WILL SURVIVE

Big R Supercenter **NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW** 935-3229 / 31

1	MAN ON FIRE
2	CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN
3	STARSKY AND HUTCH
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6	SCHOOL OF ROCK
7	HELLBOY
8	I WILL SURVIVE

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3	VAN HELSING
4	JERSEY GIRL

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2	TWISTED
3	I WILL SURVIVE
4	SPARTAN
5	THE WHOLE TEN YARDS

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2	STARSKY AND HUTCH
3	SCHOOL OF ROCK
4	BONE SNATCHERS
5	SPARTAN

Big R Supercenter **DASMARIÑAS** 852-2125

1	THE WHOLE TEN YARDS
2	SCHOOL OF ROCK
3	I WILL SURVIVE
4	STARSKY AND HUTCH
5	JERSEY GIRL

Big R Supercenter **STARMILLS** 875-1927 / 961-5270

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4	VAN HELSING
5	MAN ON FIRE
6 THX	VAN HELSING

IMUS 471-8188 / 875-5858

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2	HELLBOY
3	VAN HELSING
4	JERSEY GIRL
5	KIROT SA DIBDIB
6	I WILL SURVIVE

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2	I WILL SURVIVE
3	JERSEY GIRL
4	SCHOOL OF ROCK
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6	ACACIA

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Affleck, Pitt in new starrers

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

BEN Affleck and **Jennifer Lopez** stumbled badly with "Gigli," but they hope to recover lost face with "Jersey Girl." It's a heartwarming movie that focuses on Affleck as a successful music publicist who is suddenly left to care for his wife. Liv Tyler is Maya, the new woman in Affleck's life, and his daughter Gerlie at age 7 is played by new child discovery **Raquel Castro**, who looks exactly right for the role of Ben and J. Lo's child.

Unable to cope with taking care of his daughter all by himself after his wife's departure, Affleck's character snaps while on the job, and he kisses his high-flying career goodbye.

He moves back to his father's New Jersey home. It's supposed to be a temporary arrangement, but it lasts for seven years. He still hopes to eventually return to the city, but he adores his young daughter, and she loves her life in the suburbs. To her, Jersey is paradise. But, will Gertie ever fill up the ache in Affleck's life?

Another promising film, **Wolfgang Petersen**'s "Troy," is an epic action-adventure tale with strong star value (**Brad Pitt, Orlando Bloom, Eric Bana**).

Based on "The Iliad," the movie's story is set in 1215 B.C. The epic chronicle of the Trojan War begins as the passion of two of history's most legendary lovers, Prince Paris of Troy (Bloom) and Queen Helen of Sparta (**Diane Kruger**).

It ignites a war between the Trojans and the united tribes of Greece. When the two armies clash, Achilles (Pitt) emerges as the key to the Greeks' victory or defeat over the seemingly invincible army of Troy, led by the mighty Prince Hector (Bana).

While the film stages spectacular battle scenes involving thousands of soldiers and hundreds of ships, the story's focus is still the timeless human aspect of the victories and defeats that the ancient poet Homer recorded.

But the storytelling isn't traditionally black-and-white.

The new film version is modern because it deals with the reality of human drama. As director Petersen observes, "Life is much more complex and interesting—and, because of that, it's also more tragic."

Finally, in **Gerard Pires**' latest action thriller, "Steal," **Stephen Dorff** plays Slim, the head of a group of bank robbers that's good both in pulling off remarkable heists and getting off scot-free.

Unfortunately, on their final heist that they expect to set them up for life, the cops are finally onto their trail. To make things even worse, hired killers lured by the loot want to grab a big part of the action.

"Steal" also stars **Natasha Hentridge** as an agent assigned to track down the robbers.

Pires' film required its principal actors to do a lot of stunts, so Dorff had to train for several weeks before shooting. He ended up doing all of his climbing stunts—a rare feat for leading men like him, who usually leave the really hard stuff in their actioners to the stunt guys.

Maria Ressa

CNN's Jakarta Bureau chief **Maria Ressa** is covering the national elections in the Philippines by way of daily in-depth reports and exclusives aired during the TV news network's programs like "CNN Today," "World News, Asia" and "World News."

'About a Boy'

ON May 16 at 9 p.m., Star Movies screens "About a Boy," a **Hugh Grant** starrer and feel-good comedy drama. Grant plays a rich and indolent Londoner who, in search of available women, invents an imaginary son so he can attend single-parent meetings.

He meets a 12-year-old boy with problems at school. As they become friends, Grant's character teaches the boy how to be a cool kid, while the boy helps Grant to finally grow up.

'Teen Titans'

WEEKENDS at 9 a.m., Cartoon Network is now showing the critically acclaimed action series, "Teen Titans." Join Robin the Boy Wonder, Beast Boy, Cyborg, Raven and Starfire, teenage superheroes, as they unite to protect Earth from a new generation of villains.

'Love Storm'

F4's **Vic Zhou** and **Ken Zhu** co-star with **Vivian Hsu** in GMA-&'s afternoon Chinovela, "Love Storm." The drama series' plot involves a kidnapping incident, the criminal underworld, Zhu's character's painful past, and a daunting choice between love and friendship.

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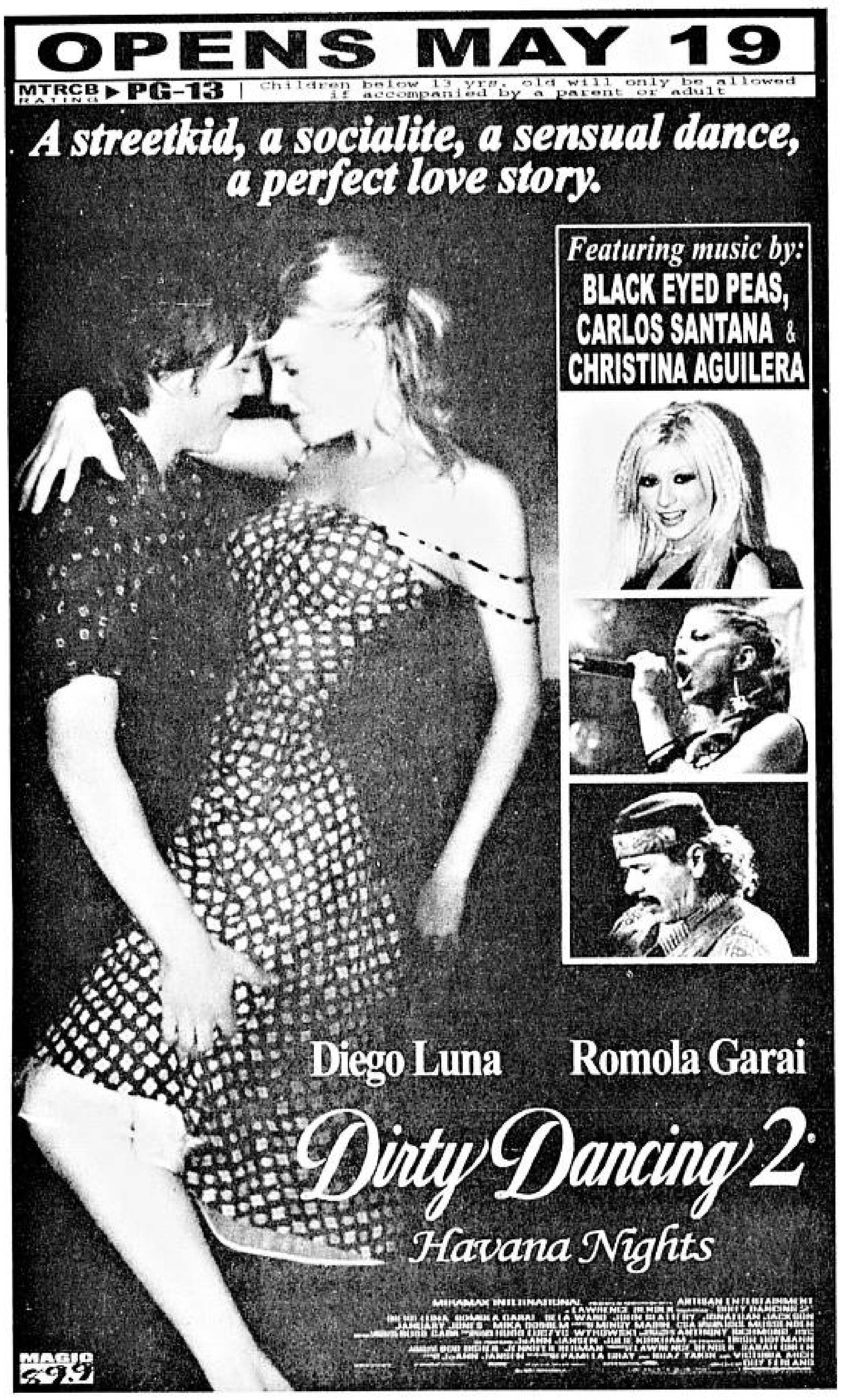
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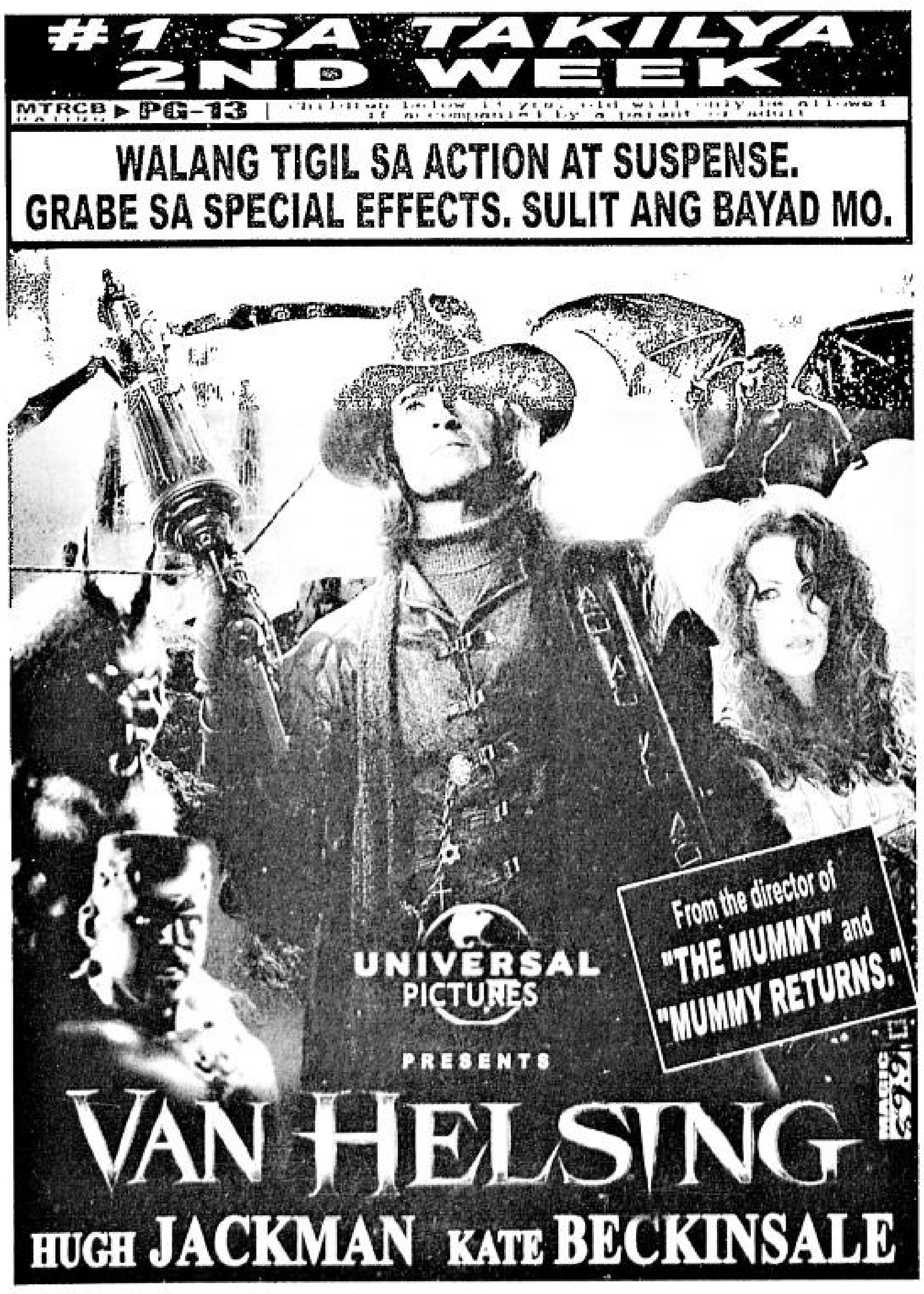
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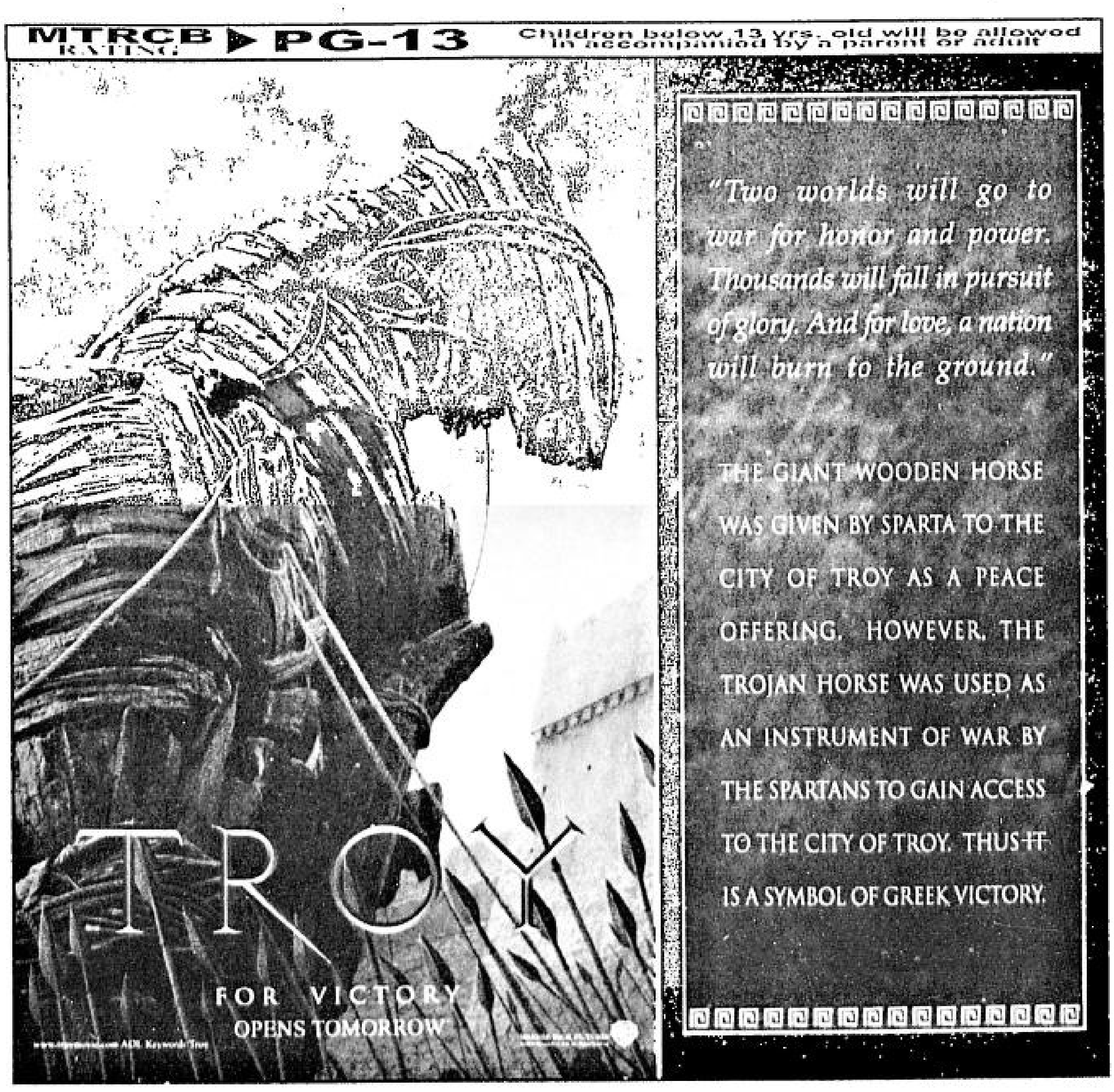
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"Two worlds will go to war for honor and power. Thousands will fall in pursuit of glory. And for love, a nation will burn to the ground."
THE GIANT WOODEN HORSE WAS GIVEN BY SPARTA TO THE CITY OF TROY AS A PEACE OFFERING. HOWEVER, THE TROJAN HORSE WAS USED AS AN INSTRUMENT OF WAR BY THE SPARTANS TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE CITY OF TROY. THUS IT IS A SYMBOL OF GREEK VICTORY.
TROY
FOR VICTORY
OPENS TOMORROW

"I DON'T CARE what people say," claims Jennylyn, even as she tries to explain her side.
RUDY ESPERAS

'If you can't hack it, let's quit,' mom . . .

From page A32

Two weeks ago, she signed a recording contract, also with GMA 7.

Although Jennylyn feels bad about the negative write-ups about her, she said she ignores them "and simply carries on with the job."

"I don't care what people say," she said. "This early, I'm already numb to these things. What I do is try to explain my side whenever I get interviews like this.

"I'm not *suplada* or *mataray*," she added. "I'm always misinterpreted because I'm the quiet type. Now I try to socialize with other people, but it's hard. I'm slowly trying to work at it. I try to be more sociable."

Gary V show extended

SHOW TIME

"GARY V's Hits Music Museum . . . The Repeat!" is extended. Catch Gary Valenciano in the show's last run on May 13 and 14, 8 p.m.

Joining Gary are his youngest son, Gabriel, Powerplay, Ugoy Ugoy Band, May Ann Casal-Soriano, Melissa Fontano and R&B princess Kayla.

Gary will also sing beautiful duets with his mother, Grimilda Ortiz, and his only daughter, Kiana, on a video screen.

Musical direction is by Mon Faustino.

Produced by Manila Genesis Entertainment and GV Production Inc. for Manna Entertainment, the series is presented by PLDT and ABS-CBN in cooperation with ABS Bitter Herbs.

The concert is also sponsored by the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Monster Radio RX93.1, 101.1 Yes! FM, Love Radio 90.7, 105.1 Crossover, Kitchen, Anonymous and the French Baker.

Tickets are available at Ticketworld (891-9999) at major National Bookstore branches, Robinson's Department Store Malate and Galleria, Tower Records Makati and Alabang, and Music Museum (72-16726). For more information, visit www.ticketworld.com.ph, www.garyv.com, www.manilagenesis.com or call Genesis at 7214405 loc. 111 or 204, 7235593, or 725-1937.

Summer box-office war begins

By Janet Susan R. Nepales
LA Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—The worldwide debut of the action-adventure monster mash, "Van Helsing," signals the start of the stiff US summer movie competition at the box-office.

The big-budgeted, special effects-heavy Hugh Jackman-starrer led its competitors in an early May start.

Following "Van Helsing" are other strong contenders for the biggest summer blockbuster hit: "Troy," "Shrek 2," "The Day After Tomorrow," "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban" and "Spider-Man 2."

JACKMAN as Van Helsing

Written and directed by Stephen Sommers, who also gave us such blockbusters as "The Mummy" and "The Mummy Returns," the wild and ambitious "Van Helsing" features several legendary creatures of the night, from Dracula to Frankenstein's monster to the Wolf Man.

Hollywood Reporter wrote about the monster-hunting epic: 'There's no question that 'Van Helsing' will dominate the coming weekend. The PG-13, FX-fueled action-adventure-horror fest starring Hugh Jackman as the fearless vampire slayer is expected to draw across all quadrants—male and female, young and old. The only question is how big the movie will bow."

Film critic Bob Strauss of Los Angeles Daily News wrote of the horror-adventure: "'Van Helsing' lovingly re-imagines scenes from the Universal classics, especially in its magnificent, black-and-white opening sequence (the cinematographer is frequent Spielberg collaborator Allen Daviau). Sometimes this is done with intentionally campy humor. It's another hallmark of the James Whale and Tod Browning-directed originals, before the studio let Abbott and Costello really trash the franchises. This is especially evident whenever hunchback Igor (Kevin J. O'Connor) is on screen.

"Women will surely appreciate the baser pleasures of Hugh Jackman's title hero going shirtless as much as men will marvel at the way his partner in creature-capping, Kate Beckinsale's Anna Valerious, can run, jump and otherwise jiggle in an hourglassing corset of fiendish severity."

LA Weekly's Scott Foundas' verdict: "It's easy to root for writer-director Stephen Sommers going into this lavish interpolation of Universal Studios horror mythology. His earlier movies, 'The Mummy' and 'The Mummy Returns,' were jaunty explosions of Saturday-serial sensibilities, updated for the CGI era. The opening passages of 'Van Helsing' further suggest why Sommers is the right man for this job. When Dr. Frankenstein's monster is hounded by a lynch mob of Transylvanian villagers, Sommers and cinematographer Allen Daviau concoct striking images of black-and-white expressionist horror."

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THX 1 VAN HELSING	1 CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN	1 CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 JERSEY GIRL	1 VAN HELSING
2 CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN	2 VAN HELSING	2 JERSEY GIRL	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 VAN HELSING	2 HELLBOY
3 JERSEY GIRL	3 VAN HELSING	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 VAN HELSING	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 SCHOOL OF ROCK	3 SCHOOL OF ROCK
4 SCHOOL OF ROCK	4 I WILL SURVIVE	4 MY WIFE IS A GANGSTER	GUARANTEED SEATS 4 STARSKY & HUTCH	4 JERSEY GIRL
5 STARSKY & HUTCH		5 MAN ON FIRE	GUARANTEED SEATS 5 CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN	5 PAYCHECK
		6 VAN HELSING		
		7 STARSKY & HUTCH		

GB1 GREENBELT 1
1 I WILL SURVIVE
2 VAN HELSING

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Cinema 2 - 12:55 pm, 4:10, 7:25, 10:40
Cinema 5 - 11:35 am, 2:50 pm, 6:05, 9:20
AYALA CENTER CEBU
Cinema 2 - 12:15 pm, 3:05, 6:15, 9:45
Cinema 4 - 11:15 am, 2:05 pm, 5:15, 8:45
GLORIETTA 1
Cinema 1 - 1:30 pm, 4:45, 8:00
Cinema 2 - 12:15, 3:30, 6:45, 10.00

GLORIETTA 4
Cinema 1 - 2:05 pm, 5:20, 8:35
Cinema 3 - 12:45 pm, 4:00, 7:15, 10:30
Cinema 6 - 12:05 pm, 3:20, 6:35, 9:50
GREENBELT 1
Cinema 2 - 11:15 am, 2:30 pm, 5:45, 9:00
GREENBELT 3
Cinema 1 - 12:15 pm, 3:30, 6:45, 10:00
Cinema 2 - 2:40 pm, 5:55, 9:10
Cinema 5 - 1:45 pm, 5:00, 8:15, 11:30

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Editor Louie C. Camino

'If you can't hack it, let's quit,' mom tells 'StarStruck' Jennylyn

By Marinel R. Cruz

IS "StarStruck" winner Jennylyn Mercado showing a star complex too early?

"Give her more time to adjust," her mother Lydia Mercado said on Monday. "She still has to learn the ways of show business. She's a very private person. She's not yet used to show business."

The mother added, "That's why I always tell Jen, *kung hindi mo na kaya, tumigil na tayo* (If you can't hack it, let's quit)."

Jennylyn herself said she is misinterpreted because she's "the quiet type," but that she's trying to be "more sociable."

Mrs. Mercado was reacting to reports that her 16-year-old daughter had thrown a fit on the set of the Sunday noontime show "SOP," where she is one of the hosts. The May 2 "SOP" was telecast live from Enchanted Kingdom in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

The "StarStruck" winner was supposed to do a "Side by Side by Side" segment with co-hosts Jolina Magdangal, Yasmien Kurdi and Karylle. She was then supposed to perform a solo number to introduce a soft drink product.

But Jennylyn reportedly threw a tantrum when her sequence guide was changed. Several tabloids quoted Jennylyn as saying, "*Pinapahirapan niyo ako! Ang init-init pa naman dito.*"

When she left the "SOP" set, Jennylyn reportedly ignored the fans who had gathered around her.

"SORRY."
"I apologize in behalf of my daughter to the people she may have hurt," says Mommy Lydia, with daughter Jennylyn. RUDY ESPERAS

"I apologize in behalf of my daughter to the people she might have hurt that Sunday," Mrs. Mercado told Inquirer Entertainment in an interview at the Mercado home in Las Piñas City on Monday. "My daughter was very stressed at that time. Her schedule had been so hectic. The weather didn't help. It was so hot that day."

Mrs. Mercado pointed out that Jennylyn had to sing three songs at three different GMA studios for that particular "SOP" episode. In fact, she said, her daughter was supposed to sing for her friend, fellow young star Angel Locsin, who was celebrating her birthday. But Jennylyn arrived late at the studio where Angel was, and she was not able to sing.

Jennylyn's mother, known in show biz circles as Mommy Lydia, said that because of the mix-up in the sequence guide, Jennylyn also lost a pair of rubber shoes. "We couldn't find it so she was forced to wear slippers to one of her performances," she explained.

According to Jennylyn, she never meant to ignore her fans. She said, "How can I do that when I didn't even see them? They were far from me and there was a barricade.

"Besides," she added, "*sobrang ngarag na ako* (I was already so rattled) with all the segments that I had to do."

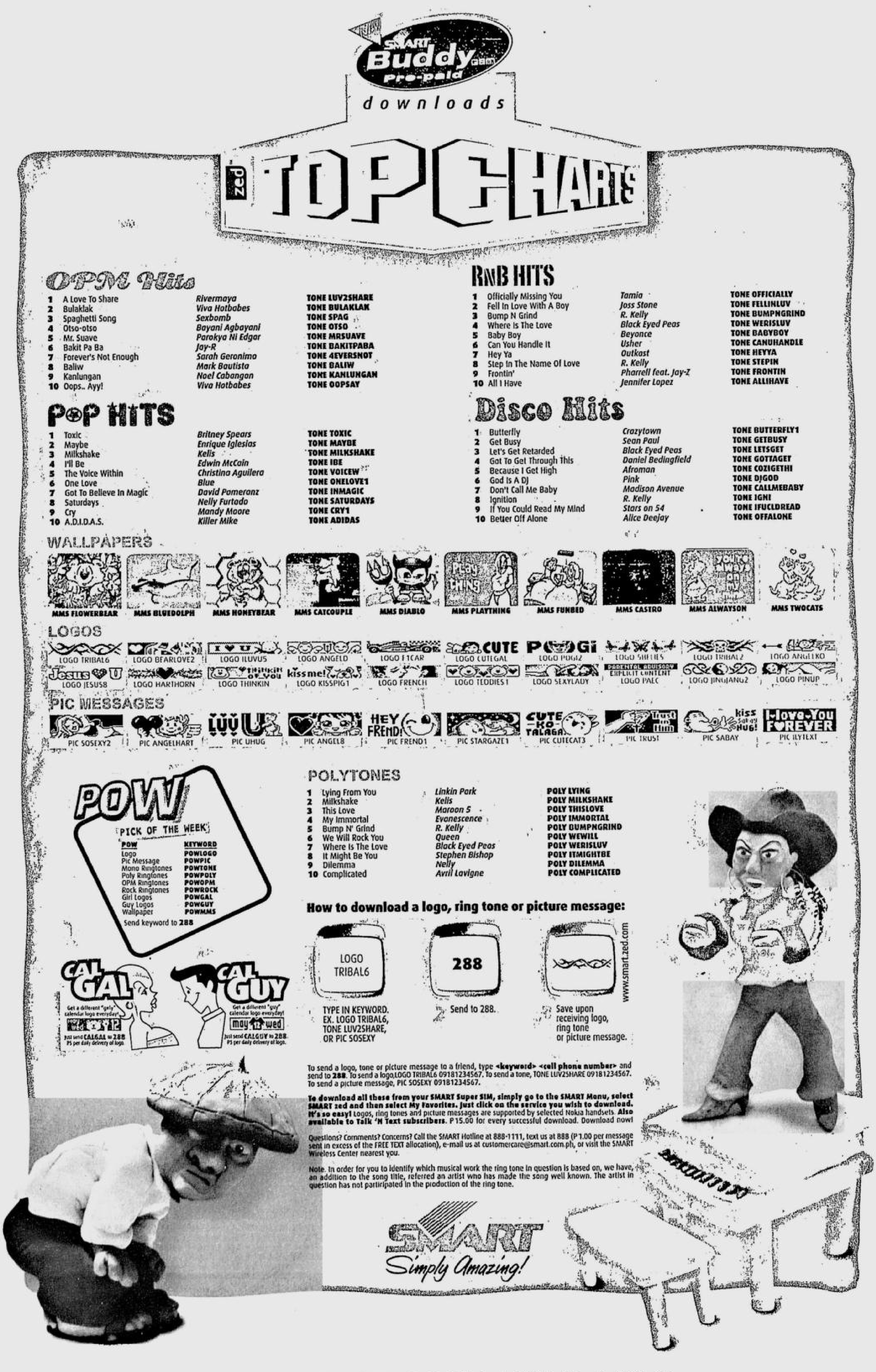
She added she did not even have the time to mingle with her "SOP" co-hosts because she had to rush to the taping of the teen show "Click," where she is also a regular member of the cast.

"I had to get to the 'Click' taping by 3 p.m.," she said. "I had to travel from Laguna to SM Sta. Mesa in Quezon City."

Jennylyn became a show biz sensation when she and Mark Heras won the reality-based talent search "StarStruck" on GMA 7 in February.

She is now seen on four television programs on GMA 7—"Love to Love," "Click," "SOP," and a new soap featuring all 14 "StarStruck" finalists.

IF/A31



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3	Spaghetti Song	Sexbomb	TONE SPAG
4	Otso-otso	Bayani Agbayani	TONE OTSO
5	Mr. Suave	Parokya Ni Edgar	TONE MRSUAVE
6	Bakit Pa Ba	Jay-R	TONE BAKITPABA
7	Forever's Not Enough	Sarah Geronimo	TONE 4EVERSNOT
8	Baliw	Mark Bautista	TONE BALIW
9	Kanlungan	Noel Cabangon	TONE KANLUNGAN
10	Oops.. Ayy!	Viva Hotbabes	TONE OOPSAY

RnB HITS

1	Officially Missing You	Tamia	TONE OFFICIALLY
2	Fell In Love With A Boy	Joss Stone	TONE FELLINLUV
3	Bump N Grind	R. Kelly	TONE BUMPNGRIND
4	Where Is The Love	Black Eyed Peas	TONE WERISLUV
5	Baby Boy	Beyonce	TONE BABYBOY
6	Can You Handle It	Usher	TONE CANUHANDLE
7	Hey Ya	Outkast	TONE HEYYA
8	Step In The Name Of Love	R. Kelly	TONE STEPIN
9	Frontin'	Pharrell feat. Jay-Z	TONE FRONTIN
10	All I Have	Jennifer Lopez	TONE ALLIHAVE

POP HITS

1	Toxic	Britney Spears	TONE TOXIC
2	Maybe	Enrique Iglesias	TONE MAYBE
3	Milkshake	Kelis	TONE MILKSHAKE
4	I'll Be	Edwin McCain	TONE IBE
5	The Voice Within	Christina Aguilera	TONE VOICEW
6	One Love	Blue	TONE ONELOVE1
7	Got To Believe In Magic	David Pomeranz	TONE INMAGIC
8	Saturdays	Nelly Furtado	TONE SATURDAYS
9	Cry	Mandy Moore	TONE CRY1
10	A.D.I.D.A.S.	Killer Mike	TONE ADIDAS

Disco Hits

1	Butterfly	Crazytown	TONE BUTTERFLY1
2	Get Busy	Sean Paul	TONE GETBUSY
3	Let's Get Retarded	Black Eyed Peas	TONE LETSGET
4	Got To Get Through This	Daniel Bedingfield	TONE GOTTAGET
5	Because I Get High	Afroman	TONE COZIGETHI
6	God Is A DJ	Pink	TONE DJGOD
7	Don't Call Me Baby	Madison Avenue	TONE CALLMEBABY
8	Ignition	R. Kelly	TONE IGNI
9	If You Could Read My Mind	Stars on 54	TONE IFUCLDREAD
10	Better Off Alone	Alice Deejay	TONE OFFALONE

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PIC MESSAGES

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POW
PICK OF THE WEEK

POW	KEYWORD
Logo	POWLOGO
Pic Message	POWPIC
Mono Ringtones	POWTONE
Poly Ringtones	POWPOLY
OPM Ringtones	POWOPM
Rock Ringtones	POWROCK
Girl Logos	POWGAL
Guy Logos	POWGUY
Wallpaper	POWMMS

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POLYTONES

1	Lying From You	Linkin Park	POLY LYING
2	Milkshake	Kelis	POLY MILKSHAKE
3	This Love	Maroon 5	POLY THISLOVE
4	My Immortal	Evanescence	POLY IMMORTAL
5	Bump N' Grind	R. Kelly	POLY BUMPNGRIND
6	We Will Rock You	Queen	POLY WEWILL
7	Where Is The Love	Black Eyed Peas	POLY WERISLUV
8	It Might Be You	Stephen Bishop	POLY ITMIGHTBE
9	Dilemma	Nelly	POLY DILEMMA
10	Complicated	Avril Lavigne	POLY COMPLICATED

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Note. In order for you to identify which musical work the ring tone in question is based on, we have, an addition to the song title, referred an artist who has made the song well known. The artist in question has not participated in the production of the ring tone.

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Peso slides past 56:$1; stocks slump

INDICATORS

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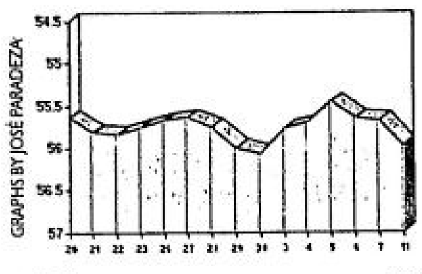


GRAPHS BY JOSÉ PARADEZA

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 55.98 = $1
As of 5 p.m., May 11, 2004

¥ 113.32 = $1
As of 5 p.m., May 11, 2004

GOLD: $378.90-379.40
per ounce Hong Kong, May 11, 2004

May 11, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.843526	1.000000	55.7460
Japan	Yen	0.007423	0.008800	0.4906
United Kingdom	Pound	1.499283	1.777400	99.0829
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.108153	0.128215	7.1475
Switzerland	Franc	0.649716	0.770238	42.9377
Canada	Dollar	0.606591	0.719114	40.0877
Singapore	Dollar	0.489000	0.579710	32.3165
Australia	Dollar	0.583553	0.691802	38.5652
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.237528	2.652590	147.8713
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.224941	0.266667	14.8656
Brunei	Dollar	0.487588	0.578035	32.2231
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000094	0.000112	0.0062
Thailand	Baht	0.020777	0.024631	1.3731
UAE	Dirham	0.229668	0.272272	15.1781
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.185500	66.0869
Argentina	Peso	0.284783	0.337610	18.8204
Brazil	Real	0.270795	0.321027	17.8960
Denmark	Kroner	0.134392	0.159322	8.8816
India	Rupee	0.018808	0.022297	1.2430
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.222010	0.263193	14.6720
Mexico	New Peso	0.072343	0.085763	4.7809
New Zealand	Dollar	0.507873	0.602083	33.5637
Norway	Kroner	0.122531	0.145260	8.0977
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014642	0.017358	0.9676
South Africa	Rand	0.120502	0.142855	7.9636
Korea	Won	0.000709	0.000841	0.0469
Sweden	Kroner	0.108972	0.129186	7.2016
Syria	Pound	0.019071	0.022609	1.2604
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025105	0.029762	1.6591
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000440	0.000522	0.0291

By Doris C. Dumlao and Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE PESO slid back to the 56:$1 level yesterday on weak regional markets and the still shaky lead of incumbent president Macapagal-Arroyo based on initial results of Monday's presidential elections, traders said.

The local currency opened at 55.88 and hit an intra-day low of 56.07 before closing at 55.98 to the dollar at the Philippine Dealing System on a turnover of $249 million.

In a single day, the peso lost 30 centavos from the 55.68:$1 closing on Friday, the last trading day before Monday's presidential elections.

At the same time, stocks fell to a three-week low yesterday, weakened by prospects of higher interest rates and partly by unofficial tallies showing a tight race between President Macapagal-Arroyo and movie actor Fernando Poe Jr.

Telecom leader Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) led the market decline, dropping 4.65 percent or P50 to P1,025 and accounting for 30.2 percent of total trade. Its chief rival Globe Telecom Inc ended 4.82 percent or P40 lower at P790.

"Players are tracking the movement of foreign markets and are possibly discounting a victory by President Macapagal," said Eagle Equities president Joey Roxas.

"And what do we get? We get the same problems. We're in the same sinking boat. I'm not saying we'd be in a better boat with FPJ."

The main index dropped 2.99 percent or 46.43 points to 1,508.26; its lowest since April 19. Value turnover rose to P569.22 million from Friday's P563.28 million, as losers swamped gainers 40 to three.

Money traders said that aside from the sharp dollar gains against Asian currencies—on expectations of the reversal of the historically low interest rates by the US Federal Reserve soon—the peso was weakened by uncertainties over recent polls.

Based on the latest unofficial count, the market-favored GMA was leading by only a slim margin over FPJ.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. acknowledged that the strong dollar and political uncertainties had weighed down the peso, but noted the institution did not intervene in defense of the local currency.

"It's a knee-jerk reaction because of the strong dollar, with the good data last Friday and also the expectations of an increase in US interest rates," Tetangco said, noting the Japanese yen and the Thai baht had likewise weakened against the US currency.

On Monday, the yen tumbled to an eight-month low of 114.14 against the dollar.

However, Tetangco said the peso's long-term trend was still toward appreciation and that the local currency could still hit the 54:$1 level earlier projected by BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

PESO/ B3

T-bill yields soften; 91-day rate at 7.032%

By Michelle V. Remo

APPETITE for short-term government securities was relatively strong yesterday, showing market calmness in the absence of any significant threat to the counting of ballots from last Monday's elections.

The market's willingness to park their funds in short-term government securities helped further soften rates for the 91- and 182-day treasury bills, whose yields stood at 7.032 percent and 8.327 percent during yesterday's auction.

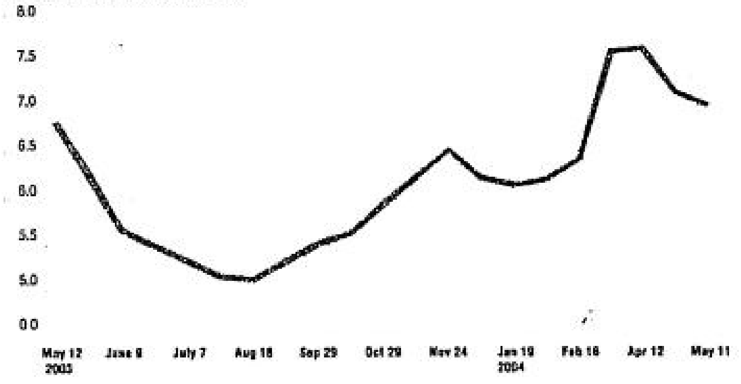
The 91-day rate was 12.9 basis points lower than the previous rate of 7.161 percent, while that of the 182-day T-bill was 4 basis points lower than the 8.367 percent recorded earlier. (One percentage point is equivalent to 100 basis points)

The average rate for the 364-day bills, however, rose by a meager 1.1 basis points to 8.908 percent.

National Treasurer Mina Figueroa told reporters that the results of yesterday's auction showed that the market, mostly composed of banks, had enough liquidity and was therefore looking for investment outlets. She said investing in government securities was one of the best options that could give them decent yields.

All short-term government securities were oversubscribed. Worth of tenders for the 91-day debt paper reached P4.92 billion compared with the government's offering of only P4 billion, while that for the 182-day T-bills stood at P4.14 billion, or higher than the P3.5-billion offering. Tenders for the 364-day bills reached P2.64 billion compared with the P2.5 billion offered by the government.

91-day Treasury Bill rates
May 12,2003 to May 11, 2004



The Bureau of Treasury's auction committee accepted P3.32 billion worth of bids for the 91-day bills, P3.5 billion for the 182-day issue, and P2.265 billion for the 364-day paper.

Although yesterday's auction showed strong appetite for government securities, Figueroa said it still did not reflect the actual amount of liquidity among banks. She said tenders for government

T-BILL/ B3

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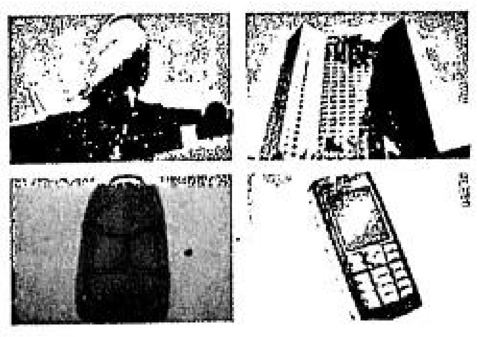

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ELECTION JITTERS

Vehicle sales down 11% in April

By Ronnel W. Domingo

VEHICLE sales dropped by 11 percent in the first four months of the year as many potential buyers decided to hold off purchases until after the general elections.

The joint report of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines and Truck Manufacturers Association showed that vehicle sales declined by 10 percent in April compared to the same period last year.

Compared against sales in March, sales in April dropped by 18.8 percent.

Total vehicle sales in April stood at 6,177 units compared to the 6,827 recorded in the same period last year.

For the first four months, total sales went down to 27,589 units against the 31,009 units sold from January to April of 2003.

The Campi and TMA attributed the decline to the "wait and see" attitude of buyers brought about by election jitters.

The slide in sales was also attributed to "some price increases due to (the weakening of the peso against the dollar, the effect of) which assemblers held back in the past few months," the report added.

"We hope to see a better performance in the coming months most especially after the smoke has cleared and a president is announced," the groups said.

Sales of passenger cars—which account for a fifth of the market—surged last month by 119 percent to 2,279 units from 1,041 units in April 2003.

From January to April, passenger car sales grew 69 percent to 10,606 units from 6,264 units a year ago.

Passenger cars sold in the first four months represented 35 percent of the 30,000 units expected to be sold in 2004.

However, sales of commercial vehicles—light trucks, trucks and buses, Asian utility vehicles (AUVs) and light commercial vehicles (LCVs); all of which make up four-fifths the market—slid by 33 percent to 3,898 units sold last month from 5,786 units in April 2003.

Sales of light trucks also went down 56 percent; trucks and buses by 12 percent; AUVs by 53 percent; and LCVs by 5 percent.

January to April sales of commercial vehicles went down 31 percent to 16,983 units from 24,745 units in the same period last year.

In the first four months, Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. sold the most cars with a 48.3-percent share.

Toyota sold 5,118 units from January to April, or 81.5 percent higher than the 2,820 units it sold during the same period last year.

Placing second was Honda Cars Philippines Inc.,which sold 2,641 units in the first four months.

The figure was 137 percent higher than the 1,114 units it sold in the same period of 2003. Honda took 24.9 percent of the market.

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. ranked third, accounting for 6.7 percent of the market.

Sales of Mitsubishi cars reached 715 units in the first four months from 716 units the same period last year.

Consulting firm claims ₱1.7M from Maynilad

By Christine A. Gaylican

AUDITING firm Joaquin Cunanan and Co. (JCC) has claimed payment of P1.7 million in professional services from debt-ridden Maynilad Water Services Inc.

In a motion filed before the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 90, Joaquin Cunanan and Co. has sought the court's permission to participate in the court proceedings reviewing Maynilad's petition for corporate rehabilitation.

The auditing firm was not on the list of creditors reported by Maynilad, prompting the company affiliated with PriceWaterhouse-Coopers to file a separate motion, according to lead counsel Alexander Cabrera.

Joaquin Cunanan and Co. said that it provided some P6 million worth of services to the company.

The Lopez-owned firm engaged JCC's services in April 2002 to review the company's business strategies for the next three years and standardize its operating procedures manual.

The motion claimed that Maynilad still has to pay Joaquin Cunanan some P1.7 million in professional fees.

"Despite repeated demands, Maynilad refuses and consistently failed to pay ... JCC's unpaid professional fees," the motion stated.

Maynilad is currently negotiating a debt-for-equity swap deal with its creditors to settle maturing obligations amounting to P18 billion.

The MWSS is on top of Maynilad's list of creditors with P8 billion in unpaid concession fees.

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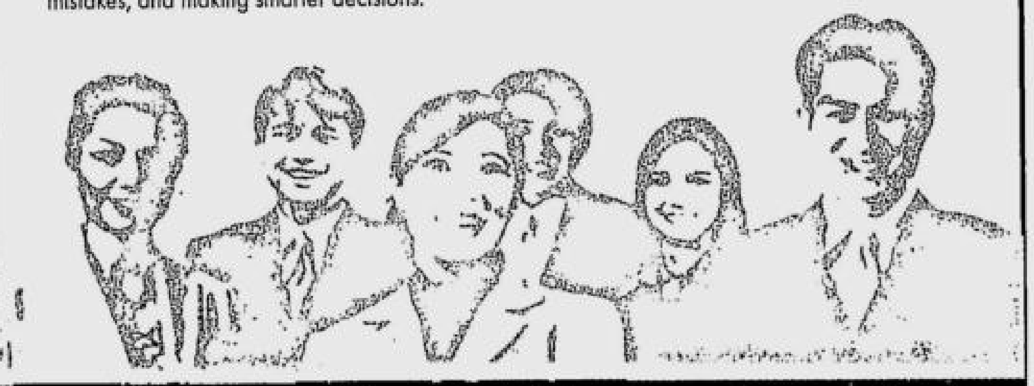

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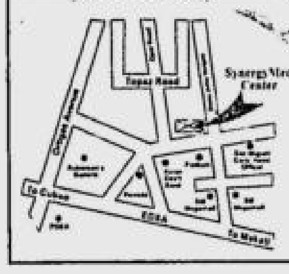

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Gloves are off

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THE PLANNED friendly entry of taipan Henry Sy Sr. into Equitable PCIBank has now the clear markings of a hostile takeover.

According to the grapevine, the taipan's Banco de Oro last week sued EPCIB before the Makati Regional Trial Court over the alleged irregular blocking and disenfranchisement of the Sy nominees to the EPCIB board.

In explaining their disenfranchisement, EPCIB corporate secretary Nilo Divina told reporters the bank viewed the impending Sy purchase of the Social Security System stake in EPCIB as a hostile takeover attempt.

The Sy camp—also supported by the Government Service Insurance System and EPCIB vice chair Martin Romualdez—had secured enough proxies from local and foreign institutional investors to nominate two directors in the 15-member EPCIB board, preparatory to the regulatory approval of the SSS sale to Banco de Oro.

EPCIB ruled that the Sy nominees failed to obtain the required nominal shares by the cutoff date of Jan. 15, 2004, only to elect two of the ruling Go family's own choices, former Trade Secretary Cesar Bautista and Ramon Jabar of the SSS, who only acquired theirs on April 23.

Chinabank swing

TAIPAN Alfonso Yuchengco's agreeing to dispose of his Chinabank shares in favor of taipan Henry Sy Sr. should now pave the way for an out-of-court settlement in the civil suit filed by AY against the unknown buyer(s) of the Taiwan bloc in Chinabank.

But according to former Bangko Sentral Governor Gabriel Singson, who brokered the talks between the two taipans, the sale of AY's block in China Banking Corp. is an entirely different issue from the AY interpleader case.

Incidentally, an AY daughter also shared that view.

But if you believe the pro-AY legal grapevine, the former ambassador has already indicated his willingness to prepare a motion, subject to an agreement with the other party, to have the suit he initiated before the Makati Regional Trial Court withdrawn.

AY filed the suit after the International Commercial Bank of China discarded a preliminary agreement with the taipan and sold its 8.079-percent stake in Chinabank to unknown buyers for a higher price.

That sale was, incidentally, coursed through the stock brokerage firm of Eddie Gobing, a known Sy ally, prompting speculations that the Sys had been behind the acquisition.

But with the AY-Sy rapprochement and Sy, because of last weekend's agreement with AY, having now become the majority shareholder in Chinabank, the swing value of the Taiwan block, whoever holds that stake now, has lost its strategic significance.

Competitive calling index

THAILAND, which until recently the Philippines has compared its macroeconomic indicators with, has further pedaled past the country on the competitiveness of overseas call rates.

Thailand's cellular phone companies early this week announced a drastic reduction in overseas calling rates. For instance, calls to the United States will now be billed at 9 baht (about 22 US cents) a minute.

Similar calls to the United Kingdom, on the other hand, will now be charged at 14 baht (about 34.5 US cents) a minute.

In contrast, our Globe and Smart charge an identical 40 çents a minute for most overseas destinations, while newcomer Sun tries to buy market share with a more aggressive 30 cents/minute.

Still No. 1

THE 10-percent market share of Liberty Flour Mills, as reported in this column Monday, referred to the industrial/wholesale buyers of flour. On the other hand, "Maya," which is produced and marketed by a sister company, Liberty Commodities, still remains the undisputed market leader in retail hotcake and flour mixes, according to a company spokesperson.

Heard through the grapevine

AN inheritance row is threatening to break out in the open among the heirs of late society jeweler Fe Panlilio.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.

Peso slides past 56 . . .

From page B1

Asked about the impact of the elections, he said: "Well it's not yet over. They are still cautious, although you saw the results of the exit polls."

The exit polls indicated that GMA may have won a fresh 6-year term.

The stock market was closed on Monday, a special holiday for the national elections.

"The presidential race is neck and neck," said Elena Ponceca, research head at Unicapital Securities. "Previous to yesterday, surveys showed (Ms Macapagal) with a comfortable lead but the initial outcome shows mixed results. It raises some worries."

"We were on (national) holiday. We would have dropped if our market was open (last Monday). This was a reaction to the fall in most markets. Basically I would attribute 70 to 75 percent of the fall (yesterday) to how Asian markets behaved. The markets were pummeled because of the outlook on Fed rates," Jojo Madrid, partner at local broker Philippine Equity Partners Inc., said.

"Twenty-five percent would be because of initial poll results since this race is tighter than expected between GMA and FPJ," he added.

Paul Joseph Garcia, chief investment officer at fund manager ING Investment Management Philippines, said most investors were influenced by the fall in other regional markets.

Analysts also said a weaker peso and a sharp decline in overseas markets on Monday contributed to the fall.

"Personally, I wouldn't associate it very much with elections. The competition is tight, but I think it's premature to relate it with elections," said Monique Lecaros, a dealer at SB Equities.

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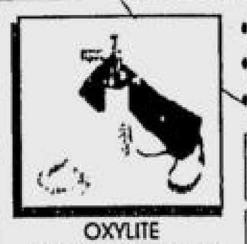

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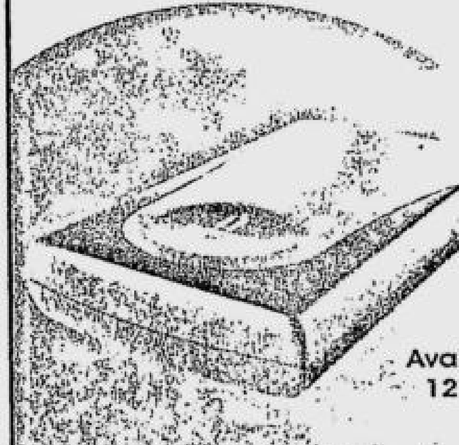

Gov't exempts ecozone firms from energy tax

By Ronnel W. Domingo

EXPORTERS located in economic zones would enjoy lower electricity rates as the Philippine Economic Zone Authority exempted them from paying a certain portion of their power bills, Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said yesterday.

Purisima said the Peza had issued a memorandum circular informing ecozone firms, which pay the 5-percent gross income tax, that they no longer have to pay the 2-percent power distribution franchise tax.

Power utilities pass on to end-users the distribution franchise tax as allowed under the RA 7916 or the Special Economic Zone Act of 1995 as amended by RA 8748, as well as the National Internal Revenue Code.

"Electricity is a major cost component in the operations of many export-oriented firms, (especially) the semiconductor and electronics firms," Purisima said.

The official said the companies' power costs were reduced to help them be competitive with similar businesses in Southeast Asia.

"The reduction will enable the semiconductor and electronics' firms, which account for more than half of the country's export revenues, to offer competitive prices for their products and rationalize their operations," Purisima said.

He added that the reduction of power costs for export-oriented firms also helped in making the country an attractive site for offshore manufacturing.

The official said the move was a result of a memorandum of agreement signed between Peza and the Energy Regulatory Commission. Signed last March, the MOA required electricity distributors that would supply electricity exclusively to ecozones to register with Peza.

Purisima added that the exemption from the franchise tax was just the first phase in the government's efforts to provide ecozone-registered firms with lower power rates.

"The (Department of Trade and Industry), Peza and the Department of Energy are studying a further reduction in electricity rates," he said.

"Such measures are being put in place to enable our ecozones to be cost-effective sites for operations and attractive for both local and foreign businessmen," he added.

T-bill...

From page B1

debt paper could have been more if President Macapagal-Arroyo showed a bigger lead in the presidential race over political neophyte Fernando Poe Jr.

"There is still much liquidity in their vaults right now, but it is still too early for them to see clear signals (of a Macapagal victory)," Figueroa said in a briefing after the auction. Partial election results as of yesterday showed President Macapagal was having a not-too-comfortable lead over Poe.

Ms Macapagal was regarded as the market's favorite candidate after rates of short-term government securities began softening two weeks ago amid news that she has already taken the lead from Poe. Interest rates for government debt paper were on a rising trend when Poe was still leading the surveys.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS

Please be informed that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of **BANCO DE ORO UNIVERSAL BANK** will be held at the Mindanao Ballroom, Westin Philippine Plaza, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City, on 28 May 2003 at 3:00 P.M.

The Agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Proof of Notice and Determination of Existence of Quorum
3. Certification of Quorum
4. Approval of the minutes of the annual meeting of stockholders held on 26 May 2003
5. President's Report
6. Approval and Ratification of all Actions of the Board of Directors and Management during their term of office
7. Amendment of Sections 16 and 17, Article IV of the By-Laws
8. Election of Directors
9. Appointment of External Auditor
10. Other Matters
11. Adjournment.

The Board of Directors has fixed the close of business on 15 March 2004 as the record date for the determination of stockholders entitled to notice and to vote at said Annual Meeting. Accordingly, only stockholders of record as of the record date will be entitled to vote at the said meeting.

If you intend to be represented by a proxy, please submit the accomplished proxy form to the Office of the Corporate Secretary no later than 13 May 2004. A forum for the purpose of validating the proxies submitted shall be held on 19 May 2004.

ISMAEL M. ESTELLA
Acting Corporate Secretary
(Original signed)

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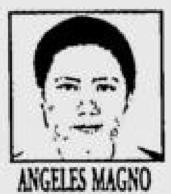
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Vote so close; Bush learning Filipino

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

OBVIOUSLY, today is not a good day for me to write about the stock market. The voting is over, but the result still uncertain. The Comelec can either use the very quick count or the slow count. The very quick count is available after only 8 hours, 4 hours before the polls close, but clearly it does not include all the voters and is therefore not reliable. The slow count is totally accurate, but unfortunately takes 6 years.

To date, over 300 people have been killed or injured, not a good advertisement for the country. In England, the campaign lasts only three weeks and is very low key. In the last election, there was only one casualty, an old lady who slipped on a banana skin while leaving the polling booth. It was later discovered that the banana had been imported from the Philippines.

My 6-year-old daughter is a prolific reader like me, and when she comes across a word that she does not know, she asks me to define it. One of the words was "disappointed." After I had explained it, she put her finger on her nose and said, "Dis is a flat nose." Then she put her finger on my nose and said, "Dis a pointed." I sat there stunned. In 12 years time, Miss Bearbull will be writing her own column, I hope.

I remember falling asleep in the middle of an English literature class. The teacher threw a book at me. I awoke and said, "What was that?" "A flying Chaucer," he replied.

I was standing on top of the Mayon Volcano when there was a loud rumbling, and it started to erupt. I shouted to the people in Mayonnaise to get away thereby saving many lives. Later, I wrote a thesis on Volcanology and graduated magma come louder.

The Queen Mary II just made her maiden voyage. A shoal of fish looked up and one said, "That's an enormous cloud above us." "No," said an educated sardine, "that's the Queen Mary's bottom." "In that case," said a herring, "God save the King."

A car was driving along Edsa when a large crate fell out of a van and scattered hundreds of tacks on the road. The driver swerved but was immediately given a ticket. "What's that for?," he asked. "Tacks evasion," said the cop.

There are a number of mechanical devices, which cause sexual arousal in women. The best is a Mercedes Benz.

My wife always laughs during sex, no matter what she is reading.

* * *

Last Friday night, it was announced that 288,000 new jobs had been created in the US. This was far in excess of the 160,000 economists expected and follows 338,000 the previous month. This confirmed Chairman Greenspan's forecast that the economy was expanding rapidly and would continue to do so without any immediate sign of inflation. This was due to an awesome increase in productivity, thanks to companies adopting new technology.

You might reasonably think that Wall Street would have a meteoric rise, but the reverse happened and the DOW fell 250 points in two days. Instead of concentrating on the booming economy, investors started worrying about the FED increasing interest rates. This is despite an assurance that the Fed would only move at a carefully measured pace, probably one-quarter of one percent at a time. In 1997, when the market was booming, the FED increased rates rapidly and brought the DOW crashing down. The FED learned a lot from their mistake and will not repeat it.

Of course, interest rates will start rising soon but at a controlled pace that will not cause another panic. Probably, by the end of 2,005, US rates will be 2.5 percent to 3 percent. As our dollar bonds are linked to theirs, this means that interest rates here must also rise and make government borrowing more expensive. With a P4-trillion debt, rising at least until 2009, whoever becomes president will be faced with the daunting task of trying to pay the ever-increasing overseas debt that already eats up 37 percent of our national income.

The first action the new government must take is to increase revenue, not only from taxation and excise duty, but also through higher taxes on tobacco and alcohol. In order to do this, it will need the cooperation of the legislature. I hope that senators and congressmen will not vote along party lines but will behave as Filipinos since this is a national crisis.

Without their help, I fear that the debt will rise above 50 percent of national income, leading either to default, or asking help from the IMF. If the latter course is chosen, the IMF will impose harsh conditions and the peso will weaken further. President Bush said after 9/11, "We are Republicans or Democrats, but in times of crisis, we are Americans." Our politicians have to develop a similar national perspective, and the formation of a government that chooses the best person for each job, regardless of party, is our only hope of salvation.

In recent months, our exports have been rising, and one of our fastest-growing markets is China. This is now second to Japan and way ahead of the US, which has been declining steadily. The Chinese economy is growing at an unsustainable 9.7 percent in the 1st quarter, the money supply is 20 percent per annum, and inflation last month was 3 percent. China has recognized the danger and is cutting back on steel and cement. Other commodities will follow. The country that will suffer most is Australia, which is commodity-rich, but all of Asia will be affected, including the Philippines.

The upward spiral in interest rates has begun and the UK raised the bank rate for the third time in six months, from 3.5 percent to 4.25 percent. Most other countries will gradually have to follow, so the long-term outlook for world economies is exceptionally difficult to foretell. If there is a big post-election rally, I would advise investors to sell into it. My last signal, two weeks ago, was a SELL at a much higher level.

Newsflash

The difference between the results from the Comelec and Namfrel is due to the fact that the latter has been counting the wrong votes. According to their tally, MEGAWATI is ahead.

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BIR goes after tax-dodging banks

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue has begun conducting audit investigations of banks suspected of failing to remit billions of pesos in taxes from foreign currency deposit units (FCDUs).

BIR Deputy Commissioner Kim Henares told reporters the revenue agency has sent preliminary assessment notices to banks, detailing discrepancies between their tax remittances and their actual tax obligations.

The BIR is auditing the banks' FCDU tax remittances for the period covering 1998 up to the present, when taxes on FCDUs and offshore banking units (OBUs) were restored following the implementation of the tax reform program.

The lifting of the tax exemption of FCDUs and OBUs has generated complaints from the banking sector.

In response, Malacañang last month signed Republic Act No. 9294, restoring the tax exemption of FCDUs and OBUs.

"The law granting them tax exemption has already been signed, but they have to remit the taxes they owe the government since 1998 (when the law exempting them from taxes was lifted)," said Henares.

Michelle V. Remo

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RP kids in int'l science fair

TEN FILIPINO high school students are representing the country in the largest science competition in the world, the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Intel ISEF) in Portland, Oregon, on May 9-15,2004.

The Philippine delegates won at the national finals of the 2003-2004 Intel Philippine Science Fair held at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City.

The Intel PSF is an annual competition that aims to promote science and technology consciousness among the youth through the exhibition of science investigative or research projects.

The winners in the individual category and participants to the Oregon competition are Joy Anne L. Aquino, E. Rodriguez Jr. High School in Quezon City; Anna Kristina B. Bautista, Philippine Science High School, Quezon City; Domingo C. Vargas Jr., Claro M. Recto High School, Manila, and Mark Leo P. Bejemino, Philippine Science High School, Western Visayas campus, Iloilo City.

The winners in the team category are Jayson Reggie T. Obos, Melanie C. Melchor, and Trina G. Napasindayao from Quezon City Science High School, Quezon City; and Anne Margrette C. Velasquez, Ma. Katrina D. Rivera, Allan Ray E. Gonzales from Manila Science High School, Manila.

The Intel ISEF provides an opportunity for the world's best young scientists and inventors to come together to share ideas, showcase cutting-edge science projects, and compete for over $3 million in awards and scholarships.

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BMW 316i 2004 Steel Gray, 3,300 km, P1,490,000
BMW 318i Exec 2003 Orient Blue, 9,900 km, P2,000,000
BMW 525i Exec 2002 Titanium Silver, 13,700 km, P2,525,000
BMW 316i 2003 Titanium Silver, 3,100 km, P1,525,000
BMW 318i Limo 2003 Steel Gray, 13,900 km, P1,650,000
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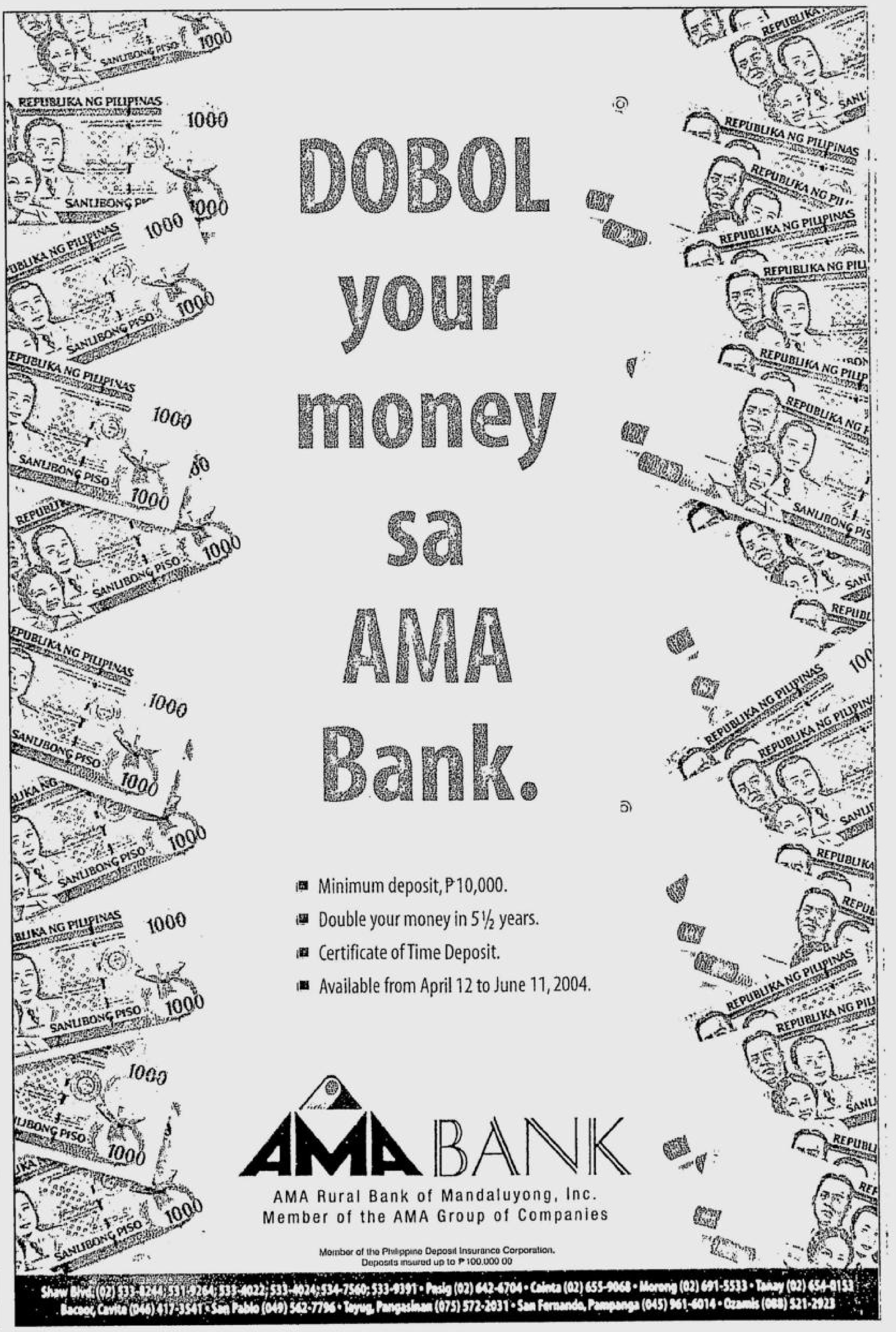

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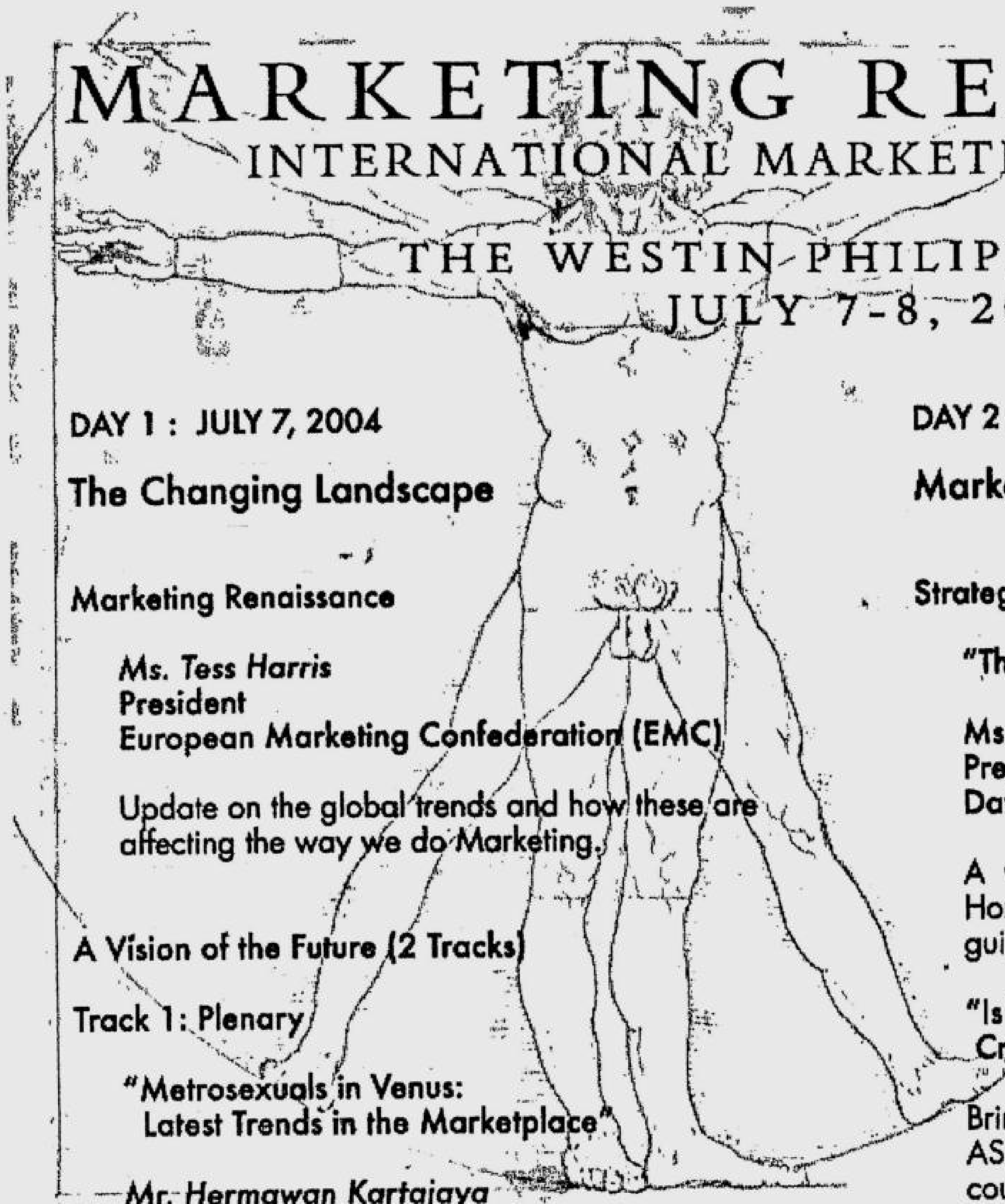

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Marketing Renaissance

Ms. Tess Harris
President
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A Vision of the Future (2 Tracks)

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A peek into the new power blocs of consumers and how Marketing can cope.

"The Road to Change, Development and Sustainable Growth"

The pathways toward meaningful change, strategic development and sustainable growth through innovative / creative Marketing.

Session A: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Anastacio Martirez
CMO
SMART Communications

Session B: HEALTHCARE RETAIL

Mr. Rolando P. Gosiengfiao
Chairman
Healthway Philippines

Track 2: CPM Conference
Exclusively for Certified Professional Marketers

DAY 2 : JULY 8, 2004

Marketing as Change Master

Strategies for Multi- Country Marketing

"The Growing Modern Trade Profit in Asia"

Ms. _Terry Montgomery_
President & CEO
Data Ventures LLC, Charlotte, NC

A veteran marketer in China, Thailand and Hongkong, the speaker will talk about the essential guideposts when marketing in China.

"Is There an ASIAN Market? Creating the Tools for Multi-Country Marketing"

Bringing a successful Marketing model into other ASIAN territories and creating the tools for Multi-country Marketing.

Session A: PHARMACEUTICAL

Mr. Carlos Ejercito
President & COO
United Laboratories, Inc.

"Successes and Failures in International Expansion: What Lessons can be Learned?"

Mr. Bruce Hoggard
CEO, Hoggard International
President, Canada Institute of Marketing

Learn the 12 most important key success factors to consider in international expansion and the lessons to be learned.

Renaissance Companies

"Effective New Channels for Communication and Marketing"

Ms. Kim Walker
COO
CARAT Asia Pacific

Innovative and profit-driven Marketing channels that create competitive advantage and brand equity.

"Insights on Marketing: Toolboxes That Dominate the Market"

Insights on shifting consumer trends and the need to recreate and rethink Marketing to keep consumers loyal to pave the way for market dominance and leadership.

Session A: "Unconventional Marketing"

Dr. Hooi Den Huan
Associate Professor, Nanyang Business School
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Session B: PERSONAL CARE

Mr. Diosdado C. Salvador, Jr.
President
Johnson & Johnson ASEAN Group of Companies

PHILIPPINE MARKETING ASSOCIATION

For inquiries, please call the Secretariat, PHILIPPINE MARKETING ASSOCIATION, Inc., at phone numbers: 634-4890, 634-5722 or 636-1451 or email pma@philonline.com.

Registration Rates		Members*	Non- Members
Early Bird Rates	(Mar 1 - Apr 31)	8,000.00	9,000.00
	(May 1 - May 31)	9,000.00	10,000.00
Regular Rate	(June 1 – July 6)	10,000.00	11,000.00
On – site		12,000.00	13,000.00

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Chinabank buyout a good deal for SM's Sy, say analysts

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BUYOUT of the Yuchengcos' stake in China Banking Corp. is a good deal for the SM group of mall magnate Henry Sy, even if it would not result in an immediate merger with Banco de Oro Universal Bank, according to analysts.

The INQUIRER on Sunday reported that SM Investments Corp. signed a memorandum of agreement to buy the Yuchengco group's 12.68 percent stake in Chinabank for a little over P2.5 billion or about P650 per share. This shall further bring up the stake of the SM group, already the single biggest stockholder in Chinabank, to 53.68 percent.

"SM Investments Corp. believes that China Bank is a good investment and a profitable bank," SMIC said in a statement yesterday. "There is no plan for a merger with Banco de Oro. The existing management structure will be maintained."

Eagle Equities Inc. president Joseph Roxas said that based on Chinabank's profitability, SM has bagged a good deal with the Yuchengcos.

Eric Claudio, head of research at Unicapital Securities, said the cash-laden SM group appeared to be boosting one leg of their economic empire.

But while SM has ruled out a merger between Chinabank and BDO, banking regulators continue to encourage consolidation within the banking system.

"If they will merge, it will be positive for the banking system," said Alberto Reyes, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas deputy governor. "It will result in a bigger and better bank."

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 11, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	40,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17	17	17	17	15,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	41.5	41.5	40	40	665,600
Citystate Savings Bank	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	38.5	39	38.5	39	881,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	24.5	24.5	24	24	245,800
Union Bank of the Phil.	24.25	24.25	23.75	24	26,300
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.02	1.02	1	1	70,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1430	1450	1430	1450	1,660
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	22	22	22	22	15,500
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	150,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	830	830	805	815	33,140
Ipeople Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	85,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.038	0.038	0.038	0.038	4,000,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.6	1.64	1.58	1.62	6,629,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1050	1050	1020	1025	167,200
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	35,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	20	20	19.5	19.5	25,600
Manila Electric Co. B	32	32	31	31.5	551,800
Petron Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.15	3.2	1,368,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.12	2.12	2.1	2.1	30,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	1	0.94	1	220,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	620,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3	3	3	3	1,001,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	110,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	53,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	15,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	29	29	29	29	36,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	20.25	20.25	20	20	237,400
Liberty Flour Mills Inc.	14	14	14	14	49,800
RFM Corp.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	100,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	59	59	58.5	59	16,400
San Miguel Corp. B	73	73.5	72	72	62,400
Universal Robina Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	15,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	350,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.4	3,738,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3	3	3	3	63,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	80,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0046	0.0048	0.0046	0.0048	10,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	25,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.56	0.57	0.56	0.57	4,720,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	200,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	27	27.5	27	27.5	885,200
Ionics Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.2	1.2	80,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	190,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.08	1.1	1,698,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	300,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	750,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	15	15	15	15	8,700
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	5,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Pryce Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	500,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	150,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	21.5	22.25	21.5	22	156,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6	6	6	6	4,000
Far Eastern University	405	405	405	405	300
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.6	8,475,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	5,240,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	998,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	50,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	600,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.3	6	6.1	9,653,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	170,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.25	0.25	0.245	0.245	450,000
Omico Corp.	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	12,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	500,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	14,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	1,948,560	70,546,125.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	74,585,440	389,396,560.00
PRO	25,016,000	108,791,710.00
Mining	13,120,000	353,350.00
OIL	14,000,000	39,200.00
GRAND TOTALS :	128,670,000	569,126,945.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	441.03	DOWN 10.67
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,352.80	DOWN 79.18
PRO	539.21	DOWN 8.87
Mining	1,375.27	DOWN 8.68
OIL	1.20	UNCH 0.00
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	935.94	DOWN 17.27
Composite	1,508.26	DOWN 46.43

NO. OF ADVANCES: 3; NO. OF DECLINES: 40; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 24; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 67; NO. OF TRADES: 1,672

DISCLOSURES

FIL-Hispano Holdings Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 28, 2 p.m. at the Makati Sports Club, Salcedo Village, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of May 7 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

***

MEGAWORLD Corp. disclosed the resignation of Kishore Moorjani as director of the company. Appointed to replace him was Thomas Barrack. The company will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 18, 9 a.m. at Eastwood City Information Centre, Eastwood City Walk, Quezon City. Only stockholders of record as of April 16 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

***

SANITARY Wares Manufacturing Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 28, 9 a.m. at the 2/F Grand Ballroom of Vivere, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Only stockholders of record as of May 6 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

***

SAN Miguel Corp. and **Ginebra San Miguel Inc.** will hold an investors' briefing on May 13, 2 p.m. at the Executive Dining Room, 2/F of SMC Head Office Complex, Mandaluyong City.

***

ALFREDO de Borja was nominated independent director of **Ionics Inc.**

***

CORRO-Coat Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 14, 3 p.m. at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club, Mandaluyong City. Only stockholders of record as of May 11 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

***

INTERPHIL Laboratories Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 9, 3 p.m. at the Makati Sports Club, Salcedo Village, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of April 28 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

***

PARITY Values Inc., majority shareholder of Liberty Flour Mills Inc., bought 42,145 shares of Liberty at P15 each. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

Nenaco penalized for failing to submit disclosure

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has penalized shipping firm Negros Navigation Co. (Nenaco) for non-disclosure of uncertainties that may have affected its financial health in the third quarter.

In a letter to Nenaco vice-president Virgenito Torcal, the SEC said that it finds "no merit in the explanation" given by the company."

"As admitted in the letter, the company was at that time negotiating for restructuring of debt which is a clear indication of possible liquidity problem if negotiations fail," SEC wrote.

SEC said that "nowhere in the company's third quarter report could we find that it is in the said process of negotiation."

What was stated in the company's report are statements "which do not reflect the actual liquidity position."

The SEC imposed a P75,000-fine on the company.

Nenaco vice-president Virgenito Torcal, in an earlier letter to the SEC, said the firm was not aware of events affecting its liquidity at the time it submitted its third quarter financial report last November.

Torcal also said that during that time, their finances showed positive operating results and was enough to support the company's operations.

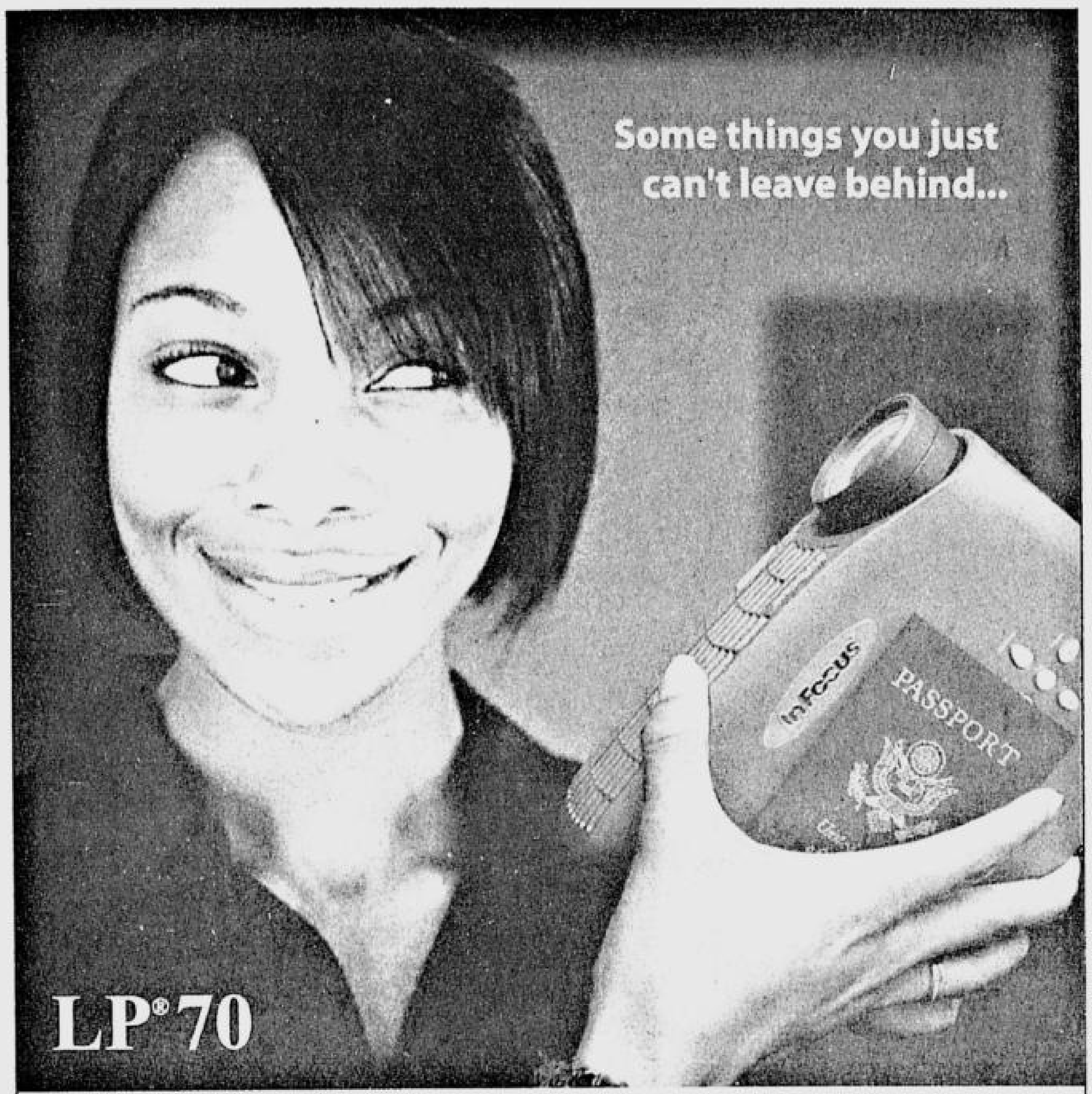
Globe denies forecast figure

GLOBE Telecom may well be on the road to profit this year, but P15 billion in net profit is not the official figure they are willing to subscribe to at this time, according to Globe's legal division.

Lawyer Caridad Gonzales said that the INQUIRER story on page B1, "Globe expects P15B in net income this year," is untrue.

In a letter, Gonzales said that although Gerardo Ablaza Jr., Globe president and CEO, did say that the company would "push all fronts to try to preserve gains achieved in the first three months of the year," he only referred to the overall financial and operational performance of the company.

"It is Globe's policy not to disclose projections regarding our financial and operating results," Gonzales stressed.



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PHILIPPINE NATIONAL BANK

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of the Philippine National Bank will be held on May 25, 2004 at 8:00 a.m. at the Ballroom, Upper Lobby, Century Park Hotel, 599 Pablo Ocampo Sr. St., Malate, Manila.

The Agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Secretary's Proof of Notice and Quorum
3. Approval of the Minutes of the 2003 Annual Stockholders' Meeting held on May 27, 2003
4. Report of the President on the Results of Operations for the Year 2003
5. Approval of the 2003 Annual Report
6. Ratification of All Acts and Proceedings of the Board of Directors and Corporate Officers since the 2003 Annual Stockholders' Meeting
7. Election of Directors
8. Appointment of External Auditor
9. Other Matters
10. Adjournment

Minutes of the 2003 Annual Stockholders' Meeting as well as resolutions of the Board of Directors from May 27, 2003 will be available for examination during office hours at the Office of the Corporate Secretary.

Only stockholders of record as of April 26, 2004 will be entitled to notice of and vote at this meeting. Registration will begin at 6:00 a.m.

If you cannot personally attend the meeting, you may designate your authorized representative by submitting a **PROXY** to the Office of the Corporate Secretary not later than 5:00 p.m. on May 19, 2004. Any proxies so received will be validated on May 20. 2004, 9:30 a.m., at the Office of the Stock Transfer Agent at Allied Bank Center, 6754 Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

Pasay City, March 5, 2004

RENATO J. FERNANDEZ
Corporate Secretary

People, Events & Products

E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Aries Espinosa

Graphic Expo 2004 set at PTTC

RIGHT on the heels of the ever-growing demand for graphic designers, animators and related professions, the much-awaited "Graphic Expo 2004" will be staged at the Philippine Trade Training Center, Roxas Boulevard, Manila from June 16 to 19.

Graphic Expo is the country's premier annual tradeshow and seminar on desktop and web publishing, digital imaging and photography, prepress and print production, large format printing, and multimedia and animation.

Showcasing state-of-the-art products, equipment, and services in those fields, Graphic Expo 2004 will feature this year's latest tools and technologies in various areas of visual production-from color management to the new tricks in PDF workflow, and all the way to the business aspect of quick printing.

Updates on these technologies are needed by present and prospective practitioners, whose expertise is greatly in demand locally and abroad. The demand for these highly-specialized professionals is surging at an unprecedented rate, according to the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda), citing the latest employment trends.

Tesda director general Alcestis M. Guiang said the "demand for animators, graphic designers, and call center personnel is so huge it will last the next 10 years."

Similarly, Graphic Expo has been attracting an annual average of over 12,000 visitors and seminar participants over the past eight years from advertising agencies and suppliers, design studios, production houses, photo and print shops, IT companies, schools, government, and the country's top 1,000 corporations.

For four days, the event will hold various programs such as technology exhibition, seminar series, digital imaging contest, animation competition, digital art competition, workshops, software demonstrations, and different product presentations.

The event is organized by Fiera de Manila (899-6893, 896-0637, 896-0639; fax 896-0637; e-mail fiera@info.com.ph; and website www.fmi.com.ph) in cooperation with eArt Philippines, IDN Club Philippines, Zone V Camera Club, IT Philippines, Philippine Center for Creative Imaging, Animation Council of the Philippines, Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines, and the Screen Imaging Graphic Association of the Philippines.

Graphic Expo 2004 is also supported by American Technologies Inc, Gakken Philippines Inc, YKL Color Lab/Fuji Film, and Epson Philippines Corp, and sponsored by the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Manila Bulletin, The Manila Times, IT Update, Metropolitan Computer Times, Computer World Philippines, Softrigger Interactive, Designer Magazine, and The Digital Filipino.com.

Arrayed among top industry players are exhibitors Altima Ads-Infiniti, Argon Animation, Asiatype, Big Pix Murals Graphics, Canon Marketing Philippines, Chase Technologiés, Compuadd, Computer Devices Corp, Computer Graphics, DLSU-College of St. Benilde, First United Marketing, Fotolam, Globis, GMP Philippines, Graficad Creation, Gretag Macbeth Philippines, and Ige Ramos Design Studio.

Lexmedia Digital, Liteware Computer Corp, Media G8way Corp, Multistiq, Nestor Distributors (Philippines), Psicom Publishing, Qualiplus International, Sandz Solutions Philippines, Signs of the Times-Abagraphics, Techway Technologies, Tektwin Marketing Corp, and Web Philippines Inc, among many others.

End of patent for innovator drugs and the hope for patient compliance

PATENTS are designed as a protection for manufacturers of pharmaceutical products. Some, however, regard it as a mechanism for monopoly and price exploitation such that even drugs used for life-saving indications may be given a premium pricing by its manufacturer, which may be beyond the financial reach of those who need it.

With the patent for the popularly prescribed antihypertensive felodipine already expired, thousands of hypertensive patients who are dependent on this drug can heave a sigh of relief with the introduction of an affordable brand of felodipine. The new product, which has a different formulation and manufacturing process than other brands, offers advantages that can help sustain control of the blood pressure for 24 hours. Various landmark trials have shown that an optimal control of the blood pressure can help prevent cardiovascular complications like heart attacks, strokes and kidney failure.

The new brand of felodipine is described to be a pharmacoeconomic drug, since it is an effective and safe drug which is bioequivalent with the reference or innovator product, and costs approximately 50-percent less. Bioequivalence is the test to assess the absorption and availability of a product in the blood and in its site of action, compared to a reference drug, usually the innovator product. If a new drug preparation is bioequivalent and is as effective as the reference drug but is lower in cost, it is said to be more cost-effective or pharmacoeconomic.

Consciousness of both doctors and patients on pharmacoeconomics is believed to be a major factor, which can help bring down the cost of medicines. In recent months, giant multinational companies have been challenged to bring down the prices of their products to ensure that patients who need them will be able to afford them and sustain their treatment. This is especially important for chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, cholesterol problems, tuberculosis and asthma.

Late last year and early this year, the prices of leading brands of a cholesterol-lowering drug were rolled back as a reaction to the overwhelming support of both patients and doctors to a pharmacoeconomic drug which was introduced at half the cost of the innovator product. This magnitude of a price rollback has been unprecedented and many are looking forward to the same reaction in the antihypertensive market. The introduction of a pharmacoeconomic felodipine will help physicians and hypertensive patients to have treatment sustainability within reach.

Felodipine is a prescription product and should only be taken with a doctor's advice.

ABC LAUNCHES 'BILANG BAYAN'

A strong 8-way partnership was built as ABC recently launched 'Bilang Bayan', an extensive and comprehensive coverage of the 2004 national elections. From May 9 to 11, ABC, together with Radio Mindanao Network, DCRV-Radio Veritas Global Broadcasting System, Today, Newsbreak, Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting, Bantay Karapatan sa Halalan 2004, and Cybersoft presented a credible and comprehensive coverage of election events and results. Present during the launching and MOA signing were (seated from left) Newsbreak Publishing Inc managing editor Glenda M. Gloria, PPCRV secretary general Clifford T. Sorita, ABC president and CEO Antonio O. Cojuangco, RMN president Eric C. Canoy, Radio Veritas station manager Melo M. Acuna, and Today editor in chief Lourdes M. Fernandez. Also present were (standing, from left), RMN VP for AM operations Charley S. Canoy, Bantay Karapatan representative lawyer Dennis F. Mosquera, Philippine Jaycees national president Jose B. Jimenez III, Cybersoft CEO and president Omar Mendoza, ABC EVP and COO Regalado D. Galura, ABC VP for news and public affairs Jose B. Javier, and ABC VP for FM operations Marc S. Gorospe.

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SHELL SIGNS DEAL WITH IPI

Pilipinas Shell sealed an agreement with Inquirer Publications Inc (IPI) for the distribution of South Express newspaper at the Shell South Luzon Tollway (SLT) station. South Express is a free travel and information guide for motorists and travelers passing through the South Luzon Expressway. Published twice a month, South Express provides a full treat of stories about delightful sites, tourist spots, food choices, festivals and events, with news and updates from PNCC on road developments, projects, alternate routes and detours to your favorite southern destinations. Present during the contract signing were, from left, IPI marketing manager Daphne Santos, IPI advertising manager Peachy Fazon, Pilipinas Shell convenience retailing manager Juan Carlos Quizon, and Pilipinas Shell product category manager and locator alliance manager Stephanie Ann Cua.

Forum on how Parkinson's Disease affects the eyes

THE PARKINSON'S Support Group of the Philippines (PSGP) Foundation will be holding its next meeting on May 16, Sunday, at 12 p.m. at the 14th floor auditorium of the Cathedral Heights Building Complex (CHBC) South Tower of St. Luke's. The meeting is free and open to the public.

The PSGP is a registered nonprofit organization that was founded in 1999, and aims to provide families and patients with Parkinson's Disease, parkinsonism, tremor, dystonia, and other movement disorders with information about their affliction. Its founding chair was the late former Vice President Emmanuel Pelaez. For the upcoming meeting, two speakers are slated. Dr. Mary Rose Teodoro, a leading ophthalmologist at Asian Hospital, will be discussing the ophthalmologic issues that commonly affect patients with Parkinson's Disease, including blurring of vision, double vision, glaucoma, eye movement abnormalities, and spasms of the eyelids, among others. This lecture will be followed by a talk by Anna Panergo, who will be discussing various issues on caregiving. The lectures will be followed by an open forum, where the audience is encouraged to ask any questions.

For more information, interested parties can call the PSGP at 631-1531 or the Movement Disorders Center of St. Luke's at 723-0301 local 3101 or 727-5552.

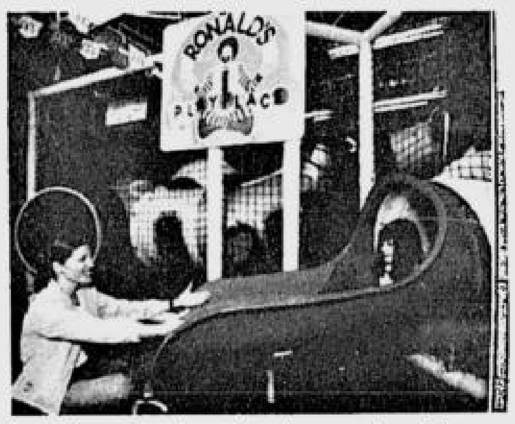
A Happy Meal before the climb

IT WAS Sunday morning and I promised Arabella to go out for our wall climbing session. She is just 7 years old and I always wonder where she gets the excitement and enthusiasm for any activity we share.

The past days were increasingly busy. It had been like this ever since I got into bodybuilding and after winning Ms. Great Body. It has opened so many doors for me-more endorsements, shows, TV guestings and my very own work-out video. I continue to learn more things every day from different people. But it also meant spending less time with my children, most especially my fast-growing daughter Arabella.

But Sunday was different. Sunday was for Arabella.

We started it right by making sure to have breakfast together at McDonald's. This has become a habit for both of us. She loves Happy Meal breakfast-pancakes and the toy that comes with it. I love it, too, because breakfast becomes a moment for us to bond.



It's that rewarding feeling I always get from her whenever she enjoys her meal and the toy she receives. Very priceless. She ate her pancakes in a huff, curiously played with her Pokemon toy, and tried to converse with me-not wasting any minute. Indeed, time flies-Arabella is growing up fast, but for as long as she continues to crave and enjoy Happy Meal, she'll still be my little baby who never fails to put a smile on my face... and in my heart.

Off we went for our wall climbing activity.

FAST, FIRST AND RIGHT!
BOMBO
STI

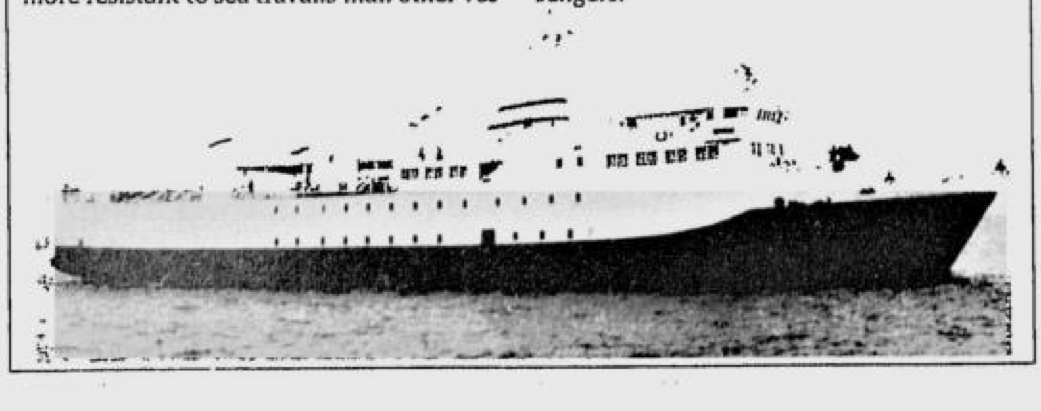
BOMBO, STI ELECTION PARTNERS

The nation's number one radio network, Bombo Radyo Philippines, and STI, the largest network of colleges in the country, have once again joined forces for the May 10, election coverage. Dubbed 'The Vote 2004, Election Results Fast, First and Right,' the two corporate giants have sealed their pact of election coverage at its finest with the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) last May 6 at STI's boardroom in Makati. Principal signatories of the MOA are Herman Basbaño, VP/COO of Bombo (2nd from right), and Peter Fernandez, SVP-education management division of STI (3rd from right). Acting as witnesses are George Castro (left), Bombo's research and development director, and Elbert De Guzman, STI's VP for marketing.

ProductFiles

New 'roro' plies Roxas-Caticlan route

THE ROLL-on roll-off (roro) ferry M/V Maharlika Siete, at 2,075 gross tons and 80 meters in length, is significantly larger and more resistant to sea travails than other vessels. Its car deck can contain up to 14 cars, 11 buses, and three SUVs, while its fully air-conditioned cabins can house up to 650 passengers.



Clips

Intro to 7 Habits

CENTER for Leadership and Change Inc (CLCI), an affiliate unit of the Ateneo de Manila University, will be holding a special 2-day session on the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens workshop this summer 2004. This interactive leadership seminar for teens is on May 14 and 15. Together with other CLCI workshops, the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, What Matters Most, the 4 Roles of Leadership, CLCI continues its commitment to its mission of inspiring and empowering individuals and organizations to achieve what matters most through principle-centered living. Interested parents who would like to give their teenaged children the opportunity to learn proven principles of the 7 Habits can call CLCI at 426-6489 to 91 and 817-2726, or e-mail Gabriel@clci.ph.

Self-esteem seminar

PARENTS who want to enhance their children's self-confidence and people wishing to develop their own self-esteem are invited to attend "Discover Your True Worth" on May 15. This is a 6-hour seminar where participants will learn about "toxic shame"-a pervasive feeling of not being enough. Self-diagnosis exercises are interspersed with lectures so participants can identify defensive behaviors they have built up to cover their shame-such as addictions, compulsions, perfectionism, people-pleasing and other symptoms. The workshop teaches techniques to overcome negative thoughts, feelings and habits. By shedding off "shame baggage", participants are freed to live out their full potential and raise kids in healthier ways. Call PowerVision Seminars and Career Counseling Services at 687-3416.

Managing restos, canteens

RESTAURATEURS, hoteliers, resort and canteen operators and those planning to open their own foodservice business now have a chance to hone their skills when ProActive Center for Training (PACT) holds its Managing a Restaurant/Canteen Seminar-Workshop from May 12 to 24 (excluding weekends). 12 noon to 5 p.m. at Ipanema Bar & Restaurant, Eastwood City, Libis, Quezon City. Reservations are currently being accepted on a first-come-first-served-basis. For details, call PACT at 687-1787 or 0916-8226053.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late **BENEDICTO E. MANEBOG** has been extrajudicially settled by his heir as Doc. 21 Page 5 Book XIX Series 2004 before Notary Public Atty. Wilfredo Albarico of Pasig City.
(PDI - May 5, 12 & 19, 2004)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late MAMERTO SANTOS was extrajudicially settled among his heirs on May 3, 2004 under Deed as Doc. No. 12, Page 66, Book V, Series of 2004 of Notary Public Amado M. Calderon of Marikina City.
(PDI - May 5, 12 & 19, 2004)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given on the loss of Confirmation Certificate No. 45980998 dated 12/18/00 for Engine No. 4D56-CX9980 of Mitsubishi Pajero Plate No. CMN-995
(PDI-May 12,19 & 26, 2004)

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IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE
HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION
MATRIMONIAL CAUSES NO.14832 OF 2003

BETWEEN GURUNG HARI BAHADUR Petitioner
and
NUCUM ERLINDA ADORA Respondent

NOTICE

A Divorce Petition has been filed against the undermentioned Respondent, Nucum Erlinda Adora, whose address is unknown who may apply to the Family Court Registry at M2 Floor, Family Court Registry, Wanchai Law Courts, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Hong Kong for a copy of the Petition. If within one month the above Respondent has not communicated with the Registry, the Court may hear the case in her absence.

Registrar

To be advertised once in Philippine Daily Inquirer published and circulating in Philippines

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NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Food Authority in Region VII, with its official address at Banilad, Cebu City, is inviting all interested qualified sack manufacturers/suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply of the following empty sack (MTS) requirements for Visayas and Mindanao areas:

MTS Type	No. of Pieces	Approved Budget for the Contract
1. Procurement MTS	600,000 maximum	4,418,400.00
2. Rice Milling MTS	500,000 maximum	3,086,000.00

Summary of Bidding Procedures:

The Bidding shall be governed by RA 9184. A single stage Two Envelope System of evaluation will be adopted. Envelope A shall contain the eligibility requirements as specified in the Instruction to Bidders which will be evaluated in a non-discretionary "Pass" or "Fail" criteria. Only those who complied with all the requirements shall be declared "Eligible" and shall proceed to the next phase which is the opening of Envelope B. Envelope B shall contain the accomplished and signed Bid Form.

Bids will be ranked from lowest to highest to determine the Lowest Calculated Bid. The bidder with the lowest calculated bid shall undergo post qualification by the Regional Bids and Awards Committee (RBAC) to verify validate and ascertain statements made and documents submitted in the eligibility requirements. After which, the bidder shall be declared "Lowest Calculated Responsive Bid" and shall be recommended for awarding of the contract.

Schedule of Activities:

Activity	Date/s	Time
Issuance of Bidding Documents	May 12-17, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Pre-Bidding Conference	May 19, 2004	10:00 AM
Submission & Opening of Bids	May 31, 2004	10:00 AM

Interested bidders may secure the bidding documents from the RBAC Secretariat, 2nd Floor, NFA, Region VII, Cebu City upon submission of a letter of intent and after payment of a non-transferable, non-refundable application fee of P5,000.00. Bidders or their authorized representatives are required to be present during the opening of sealed bids. For further inquiries, you may call the undersigned at the following numbers: (032) 232-1939 or (032) 232 6832.

The NFA reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any informality or defect found therein, and to accept bids which are deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO J. ADORABLE**
Assistant Regional Director
RBAC Chairman

(PDI - May 12 & 15 2004)

ERRATUM

In the ad of **National Food Authority** which was published in this paper on May 9, 2004 re: *NFA in Region VII Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid for the supply of empty sack (MTS) requirements for Visayas and Mindanao areas*, that the 2nd page of the submitted material was inadvertently omitted.

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22nd floor, Wynsum Corporate Plaza
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To know more about our company,
log on to www.clientlogic.com

Open House Job Fair
on
May 12,13,14 and 15
8:30 am to 5:00 pm
Interested Applicants may bring their resume and 2x2 picture to 34/f Wynsum Corporate Plaza, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City

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BOHOL 1 ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
(BOHECO1)

May 9, 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the below-listed items are invited to apply for pre-qualification and to bid with BOHECO-1 SEVILLA Mini-Hydro Project, located at Barangay Ewon, Municipality of Sevilla, Province of Bohol. Only qualified supplier / manufacturer will be accepted to participate in the bidding.

A. ITEMS TO BID

  I. Supply, Fabrication and Installation of Sluice Gates and Lifting Mechanism including installation of Steel Guides and Embedded Items as per Plan and Specifications.

  II. Supply, Fabrication and Installation of Stop Blocks and Lifting Mechanism including Installation of Steel Guides and Embedded Items as per Plan and Specifications.

  III. Design, Supply and Installation of Gates Hydraulic Unit including Protection and Control.

  IV. Supply, Fabrication and Installation of Trash Rack, Structural Supports and Embedded items as per Plan and Specifications.

B. Pre-qualification documents are available for issuance to interested potential bidders at the office of the BOHECO-I, Maca-as, Tubigon, Bohol, Philippines. Tel. Nos. (038) 508-0084, 508-0085 & 2372-205 or Fax No. (038) 508-8095 starting May 13, 2004 up to May 25, 2004 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00).

C. Two (2) copies of the duly accomplished pre-qualification statement together with all the documents required to support the statement shall be submitted to BOHECO-I, Maca-as, Tubigon, Bohol, Philippines on or before 5:00 p.m. of June 25, 2004 (the "Submission Deadline").

D. Evaluation of Pre-Qualification Documents and Notice to Qualified Bidders will be on June 28-30, 2004 and July 1-5, 2004 respectively.

E. Issuance of Plans and Specifications, Bidding Documents and Instructions to Qualified Bidders will be on July 6, 2004 to July 27, 2004 at BOHECO-I Main Office, Maca-as, Tubigon, Bohol upon payment of Non-Refundable Amount of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00).

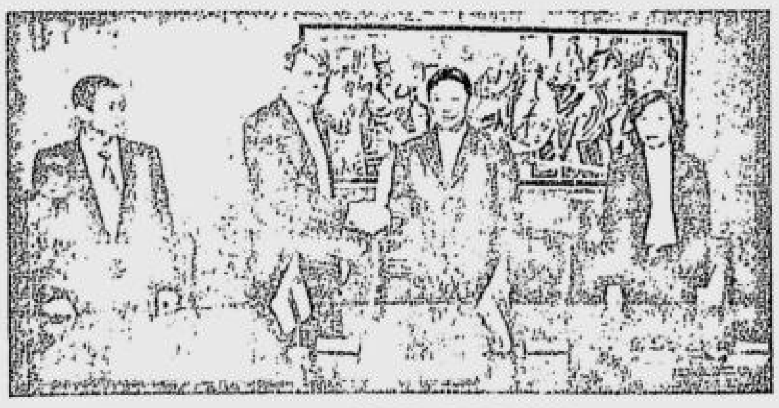
F. Tentative schedule for the Pre-Bid Conference will be on August 10, 2004 at BOHECO-I Main Office, Maca-as, Tubigon, Bohol.

G. Deadline of Submission of Bids will be One (1) Month after the Pre-Bid Conference at the BOHECO-I Main Office at which time and place the said proposal will be opened and read in the presence of the bidders or its representative

H. BOHECO-I reserves the right to reject any application and bids, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to Award of Contract without thereby incurring any liability to affected Bidders or any obligation to inform the affected Bidder(s) of the grounds for the BOHECO-I's action.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. CARLOS B. ITABLE**
General Manager

(PDI-May 12, 2004)



UPPC to construct USD 28 Million Coal-fired Boiler Plant

United Pulp and Paper Company (UPPC) recently entered into a supply and engineering agreement with Foster Wheeler (FW) to construct a Coal-fired Boiler Plant. The new boiler would cost a total of USD28 Million and it will be operational in the last quarter of 2005. The signing was held at the Phinma Plaza, Rockwell Center, Makati. Shown are (from left) Bernard Guitche (Senior Advisor, FW-Philippines), Matti Maskunitty (Regional Director, FW-Finland), Pattanapong Cholvanich (President and CEO, UPPC), Aurasa Jinawath (VP Finance and Treasurer, UPPC)

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
Ang Bangkong May Damdaming-Bayan
1598 M. H. del Pilar St. cor. Dr. J. Quintos St., Malate, Manila
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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites interested suppliers who are (a) duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietors; or (b) 60% Filipino-owned Partnership/Corporations; or (c) two or more suppliers forming into joint ventures jointly and severally liable; or (d) cooperatives duly registered with the CDA; with largest single contract, similar to the items for bid, for the last 2 years, at least equal to 50% of the approved budget; and with Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) at least equal to the approved budget, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following items:

ITB No.	Item/Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
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	90 units RSD-1 Digital Sharing Device or equivalent	P 1,591,875.00	LBP Funds
	300 units Synchronous Modem	P 471,201.00	LBP Funds
	210 units 2.0 KVA Automatic Voltage Regulator (AVR)	P 693,000.00	LBP Funds
	30 rolls Belden Ethernet Cable Cat-5	P 77,385.00	LBP Funds
2004-099	30 units 6 KVA Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS)	P 6,000,000.00	LBP Funds

Bidding of the above requirements is scheduled on June 2, 2004 at 1:00 p.m. and the Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Division of the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar St., Malate, Manila.

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on May 18, 2004, at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to the Qualification/Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

Only those bidders who comply with the Bank's requirements shall be eligible to participate in the bidding.

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any defect or informality and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Bank.

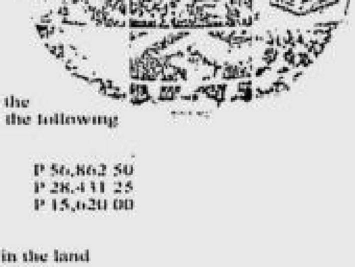
COMMITTEE ON BIDS AND AWARDS

INQUIRER CLASSIFIEDS & WOFEX 2004 WORLD'S FOOD EXPO
August 4-7, 2004 World Trade Center, Philippines

Greetings from the INQUIRER Classifieds and WOFEX 2004!

The Philippine Daily Inquirer and World's Food Expo 2004 are working together to once again come out with a very special supplement that will feature products and services in the food and beverage industry

This special pull-out section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer is a tabloid sized section (7 cols x 30 cm) and is dedicated to feature the World's Food Expo and the country's growing food industry.



WORLD'S FOOD EXPO SUPPLEMENT

This will definitely be the reference of choice

The supplement is scheduled for release on August 4, 2004 in line with the opening of WOFEX 2004. In line with this, we are providing you with the following very special advertising rates

FULL PAGE AD (23cm x 30cm)	P 56,862.50
HALF PAGE AD (23cm x 15cm)	P 28,431.25
QUARTER PAGE (11.5cm x 15cm)	P 15,620.00

- Full color advertising with NO color surcharge
- Reasonable ad rates in the most read broadsheet in the land
- A most cost efficient and effective advertising medium

ADVERTISING CONTRACT

Yes, we agree to place a ______ page ad in the World's Food Expo Supplement in the amount of P______00. We also agree to submit the ad material in TIF, EPS or JPEG format no later than July 5, 2004

Name ______ Company ______
Position ______ Address ______
Tel. No ______ Fax No ______
Email ______ Website ______ Signature ______

CONTACT INFORMATION

Premier Events Plus Group, Inc.
Telefax (632) 4364209, 4364898, 4260603, 9297003, 9297963
Email : info@pepgroup.com Website: www.pepgroup.com

Hon. Luis "Chavit" Singson supports Philippine National Dragonboat rowing team

KNOWN to be a reasonably powerful man, Mr. Singson does not cringe for the opportunity to support and pose as an advocate for the Philippine National Dragonboat Rowing Team, as a man of few words and strong convictions, he is bound to set an example to these young, impressionable athletes on how determination and fighting for the right cause can actually be a life changing experience.

Seen here with the members of the National Dragonboat Rowing Team, and Creative Director Francisco "KIKO" Yap Torno III, whose company Upper Room Productions is slated to stage the first major Dragonboat racing competition THE FIRST PHILIPPINE DRAGON CUP a Dragonboat racing event which will be held at the scenic Baywalk Area, is tagged to be one of the most prestigious Dragonboat racing event that the country has ever hosted.

Fowl! a different kind of chicken place

FOWL! opened its door in Food Odyssey at LKG Tower. It is the brain child of Mike Marquez, a third-year student of University of Asia & the Pacific.

Fowl is serving three kinds of roast chicken, the traditional Classic Roast, Diablo (spicy) for the adventurous and Honey Roasted chicken for the sweet toothed. On a regular basis they also have fried chicken (with secret herbs and spices), Chicken Salpicado, Chicken ala King, Chicken Cordon Bleu and many more. Their set meals range from P59-P99, which consists of choice of chicken and either plain, fried or java rice plus a delicious chicken broth soup (an essential for the value seeking Pinoy!). Also for those whose tastes are a bit different, they have excellent pasta with Italian meatballs and juicy tongue tingling Pork chops.

NOTICE

THE FIRST
PHILIPPINE DRAGON CUP

A Dragonboat Racing Competition
To be held at The Baywalk Area, Roxas Boulevard

Will be held on MAY 15 (SATURDAY) and MAY 16 (SUNDAY)

- This notice was issued with regards to the adjustments made to the dates previously announced.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING DIVISION
Main Office: PASONG TAMO, MAKATI CITY
☎ 899-4427 (Direct) ☎ 8978808 (Trunk) Fax 897-8425
G/F ATRIUM BLDG., MAKATI AVENUE, MAKATI CITY
☎ 8114361 ☎ 8114370 ☎ 8114012 Fax 8925578
ST. ANTHONY'S BLDG., AURORA BLVD., QUEZON CITY
☎ 912-9008-11 Fax 912-9011
SM MEGAMALL, MANDALUYONG CITY
☎ 6350219 ☎ 6872354 ☎ 6872366 Fax 6350220
G/F TRINITY BLDG., 636 T.M. KALAW ST., ERMITA, MANILA
☎ 5273342 ☎ 5224406 ☎ 5276357 Fax 5280213
ALABANG, MUNTINLUPA CITY
☎ 8424503 ☎ 8506465 Fax 8506465
e-mail address: main_classifieds@inquirer.com.ph

OBITUARIES

THE HERITAGE PARK
FORT BONIFACIO
Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig
(632) 845-2334 to 38 loc. 109/112
Sales@heritagepark.com.ph
Mortuary and Crematory opening soon!

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

Matthew 10:39

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

JAMES L. CHIONGBIAN

who passed away in the grace of our Lord
on May 5, 2004

wish to express our deepest appreciation to all of you, our friends near and far, who sent flowers, mass cards, letters of sympathy, spent precious time with us, made donations to James & Priscilla Chiongbian Foundation, and expressed in many other ways your love, concern and support during our time of greatest sorrow.

John 10:27-30

Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice and I know them; they follow me and I give them eternal life. They shall never perish and no one will ever steal them from me. What the Father has given me is above everything else and no one can snatch it from the Father's hand. I AND THE FATHER ARE ONE."

ILUMINADA "Lumen" FUENTES BERNAS

Born November 29, 1911
(Co-foundress and former owner of St. Anthony Hospital, Roxas City
Member, Catholic Women's League)

MAMA, peacefully joined our Creator and **PAPA PIO**, on May 2, 2004 at the age of 92. We, her nine children, twenty-four grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren, will miss her very much.

- **JOSE "Toto" & ESTER** & children **Galo, Taina, Don,** and **Kenneth,** & grandchildren **Klint, Gaia, Nicole**
- **Rev. Fr. EUGENIO PIO "Nono"**
- **SIMPLICIA FLORECITA "Nene Chit"**
- **ANTONIO "Tony" & CECILLE,** & children **Arthur, Patricia, Roger, George,** and **Michael** & six grandchildren
- **RICARDO "Rickman" & LORNA,** & children **Allen, April, Thea Iluminada,** and **Rickman**
- **ETHEL & RICKY BONDOC,** & children **Macky** and **Gino**
- **DAISY & FRANZ ENGEL,** & children **Caroline, Dominique,** and **Franzy**
- **ILUMINADA "Minda" & RUEL BAYLOSIS,** & children **Bertrick, BernieGwen, Brismae,** and **Bertrand**
- **DALE & GRACE,** & children **Dominic** and **Zedric**

Her remains lie in state at the family residence in Roxas City, Capiz. Interment at the Catholic Cemetery in Banica, Roxas City, will follow after the 3:00 PM Mass and Necrological Services at the Mt. Carmel Church on Saturday, May 15, 2004.

PLEASE PRAY FOR HER ETERNAL REPOSE

The Officers, Management and Staff
of the
REMERCO GROUP OF COMPANIES
announces with deep sorrow the demise of its
Former Treasurer and Corporate Secretary

FELICITAS MERCADER REYES

"Auntie"

on Monday, May 10, 2004

Her ashes are available for final respects at her residence
Gov. Damian J. Reyes Street, Boac, Marinduque.

Interment will be at the Reyes Family Plot, Boac Catholic Cemetery after the 9 o'clock Requiem Mass at the Boac Cathedral on May 13, 2004.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

ROGELIO ANDALEON ROSALES

who joined our Creator on April 23, 2004

wish to **THANK** specially our relatives and friends,
management and staff of the following companies:
PDI, CIBO, PEPATO, CAFÉ BOLA,
CIBO DI M CATERING;
Mam Margarita A. Fores & Amadito, Sir Alvin Lim,
Inday Baby Fores, Toto Oye & Inday Malou,
Inday Bledes, and Nante Santos Family.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

ARLINGTON MEMORIAL CHAPEL
12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City,
Tels. 715-1025; 715-1031; 715-1027

ARLINGTON EAST THE GARDEN CHAPELS
C. Raymundo St. cor. Mercedes Ave., San Miguel Ave., Pasig City
Tels. 747-8599; 747-8609 • Telefax 641-1760

AUREA QUIOGUE FUNERAL HOMES
243 A.B. Fernandez Ave., Dagupan City, Pangasinan
Tels. (0785) 522-3451; 522-2128; (0917) 434-9976

CAPITOL MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
1305 G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City
Tel. 732-0309, 732-1095

CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Cebu Branch: A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad, Mandaue City, Cebu;
Tels. 346-2543; 346-2601

COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City; Tels. 231-0721; 231-3192

COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City;
Tels. (082) 227-1201; 227-1258

DAYAO FUNERAL HOME
#2 Bayani St., Galas, Quezon City; Tels. 740-2683; 781-3705;
781-3688; 413-9400; 715-5594

DALLUAY MEMORIAL SERVICES
#42 Upper Kalaklan, Olongapo City
Tels. (047) 222-3605; (047) 811-1086;
(047) 222-4512; (047) 224-2014

DON BOSCO CHAPELS
Pasay Road, Makati City; Tel. 894-5932 to 34

DULCE MEMORIAL SERVICES
Jose Abad Santos Ave. cor. Dinalupihan St., Manuguit, Manila
Tels. 712-5102; 741-5125; 741-5133; Fax No. 711-3064

DYNASTY MEMORIAL CHAPELS
965 Del Monte Ave., Frisco, Quezon City; Tels. 416-3231; 4162373

ERIC SANTIAGO MEMORIAL CHAPELS
26 Bayanbayan Ave., Concepcion I, Marikina City;
Tels. 942-6044; 475-1177

FLORESCO FUNERAL HOME
219 Gen. Luna St., Concepcion, Malabon, Metro Manila; Tels.
2812963; 2813034; 2810522

FUNERARIA PANGILINAN
Santo Entierro cor. P. Burgos St., Lourdes Sur, Angeles City
Tels. (045) 888-2959 ; (045) 322-5247

FUNERARIA ANGEL QUIOGUE
No. 67 Pasig Boulevard Extension, Pasig City;
Tels. 641-7909; 641-1735
M. Almeda St., Pateros, Metro Manila; Tels. 642-3010; 633-3602

FUNERARIA FILIPINAS
187 Real St., Zapote Alabang, Las Piñas;
Tels. 873-0507; 873-0024

FUNERARIA FILIPINAS
865 J.P. Rizal St., Poblacion, Makati City;
Tels. 890-3556, 899-8191

FUNERARIA TUASON
Poblacion, San Miguel, Bulacan 3011; Tels. (044) 764-0281; 678-0266, (0917) 895-0603

FUNERARIA SAMSON
145 Bayan Luma, Imus, Cavite, Tels. (046) 471-3375; 471-2675

GARDEN OF MEMORIES MEMORIAL PARK
Calsadang Bago, Pateros, Metro Manila; Tels. 642-6181 to 82

HERITAGE PARK
Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Tels. (DL) 845-2341 to 42; (TL) 845-2334 to 38 loc. 110/112

HOLY GARDENS MEMORIAL PARK
Third Level, Unishoppe Complex
Quezon Ave., Angono, Rizal. Tels. 651-1711; 651-0737

HOLY TRINITY MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat Rd., Sucat, Parañaque City; Tels. 825-1296, 825-1291, Telefax 825-1314

LA FUNERARIA LAWRENCE BAQUIRAN
#27 Crisologo St., Vigan, Ilocos Sur; Tel. 722-2730;
Cell (0917) 5680136; (0917) 5680145
Manila #23 Pato St., Project 2, Quezon City; Tel. 434-3258

LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
1501 C.M. Recto Ave. cor. J. Mapua, Manila;
Tels. 711-6931 to 35, 732-4795, 732-2827

LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
143 G. Araneta Ave. cor. Kaliraya St., Quezon City
Tels. 749-3806 to 11; 712-3001; 743-6502 or 05

LA FUNERARIA PAZ, SUCAT, INC.
Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque,
Tels. 820-1592; 825-9947; 825-8635

LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
79 Naguilian Rd., Baguio City,
Tel. (074) 443-3337; (074) 442-3117

LA FUNERARIA SAPINOSO
G. Tirona St., Imus, Cavite.
Tels. (046) 471-3386; (046) 471-4417, (046) 571-1978

LINCOLN MEMORIAL SERVICES, INC.
Ground Floor, JEMP Bldg., J. Cabarrus cor. Monserrat Sts., Phase I, BF Commercial Center, Parañaque, Metro Manila

LOYOLA MEMORIAL CHAPELS
EDSA cor. Bernardino St. Guadalupe, Makati City;
Tels. 895-1011 to 19

LOYOLA MEMORIAL PARK CHAPELS & CREMATORY SERVICES
Loyola Memorial Park, A. Bonifacio Avenue, Tañong, Marikina City
Tels. 941-3196 to 98; 941-3676; Telefax 941-3577

MALABED FUNERAL SERVICE
3-A Coronado St., Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City
Tel. 890-63-18

MARIAN MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Marcos Hiway, Antipolo, Rizal. Tels. 645-1855

MARCELO FUNERAL HOMES
Tels. 283-1613; 273-8922

MT. SINAI MEMORIAL CHAPEL
Arellano St., Dagupan City; Tels. (075) 515-5960; 522-8783;
(0917) 520-5001

NACIONAL MEMORIAL HOMES
264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City;
Tels. 713-5231 to 35; 714-0867; 714-0868

OLONGAPO MEMORIAL PARK
Del Rosario St., Tabacuhan, Sta. Rita, Olongapo
Tel. No. (047) 223-1692

OUR LADY OF PEACE MEMORIAL PARK CHAPEL & SERVICES, INC.
No. 6 Cangma St., Antipolo City 1870
Tel. No. 697-0782, 697-0026, 650-7426; Fax : 697-2764

PAKET SANTIAGO MEMORIAL HOMES
13 V. Gomez St., San Roque, Marikina City;
Tels. 646-1725; 646-1730

POPULAR MEMORIAL CHAPELS, INC.
2141 Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila. Tel. Nos. 254-0867, 254-0839

PRIME MEMORIAL CHAPELS
200 Commonwealth Ave., Quezon City, Tels. 427-8412; 4278403

ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Ground Flr. Rolling Hills Chapel, 27th-Lacson St., Mandalagan,
Bacolod City; Tel. 433-7132

RIZAL FUNERAL HOMES
438 Comentina St., Pasay City; Tels. 831-1204
Sucat Branch: 8187 Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque City
Tels. 826-1376; 826-9682; (0915) 712-1220

SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO PARISH
Forbes Park, Makati City.
Tel. Nos. 843-8838/30; Fax No. 843-9223

SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City; Telefax 724-4139, 725-2044

ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH
Magallanes Village, Makati City; Tels. 852-8228, 852-7284

ST. MARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL
16-15 G. Tuazon cor. Loreto St., Sampaloc, Manila;
Tels. 749-3679; 781-1772

ST. PETER FUNERAL HOMES
296 Quezon Ave., Quezon City, Tels. 372-5084; 410-9286/87

UNIVERSAL FUNERAL SERVICE & MEMORIAL CHAPELS
2028 Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila;
Tels. 493-4458; 493-4540

VERONICA MEMORIAL HOMES
Official NBI Morgue 517-A Arnaiz St., Pasay City;
Tels. 831-3797, 844-7846, 843-1801; 845-4836

WELINGTON FUNERAL SERVICES
1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila; Tel. 302-5447

ZUASOLA FUNERAL HOMES
Brgy. Del Remedio, San Pablo City, Laguna
Tels. (049) 562-1668, 800-2914 Cel. No. (0917) 5016963

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord"

2 Corinthians 5:8

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die." John 11:25-26

DR. HANIEL RAMIREZ CASTRO

of Surigao City

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on May 8, 2004 at the age of 68.

His loving wife **Helen Y. Castro**; children **Haniwel, Hanilene** and **Marty, Hanie** and **Bertrand, Hanielee** and **Jun, Hani Rose, Hanicarl**; grandchildren **Hanica, Hanimartlene, Hanijoles, Hannah Lisa, Nathaniel, Nicholas, Margaux, Claudine, Emilene Helen**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel C15, La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. On May 14, 2004, he will be brought to Surigao City.

Interment will be on Thursday, May 27, 2004 at the Surigao Memorial Park.

LORENZA B. CARANGLAN
Vda. de SALVADOR

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on May 10, 2004 at the age of 76.

Her beloved children **Jing-jing, Dindo, Joseph & Marc Anthony**; in-laws, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at St. Joseph Compound, 16 Gov. Pascual St., San Jose, Navotas.

Interment will be on Saturday, May 15, 2004 at 2:00 p.m. at San Jose Catholic Cemetery.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...
INQUIRER OBITUARIES

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
and bank-to-bank payments

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

• DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS •
• DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS •
• FREE OBIT DESIGN •

CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie 833-9999

NOW SHOWING

Central

SM MEGAMALL
6331901

1	PAYCHECK
2	HELLBOY
3	VAN HELSING
4	STARSKY & HUTCH
5	JERSEY GIRL
6	MY WIFE IS GANGSTER
7	HAUNTED SPIRIT
8	I WILL SURVIVE
9	BOOBITA ROSE
10	VAN HELSING
11	SCHOOL OF ROCK
12	MAN ON FIRE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	KIROT SA DIBDIB
2	MAN ON FIRE
3	BOOBITA ROSE
4	VAN HELSING
5	HELLBOY
6	I WILL SURVIVE
7	VAN HELSING
8	PETER PAN
9	JERSEY GIRL
10	STARSKY & HUTCH
11	SCHOOL OF ROCK
12	CONFESSIONS... DRAMA QUEEN

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	HELLBOY
2	CONFESSIONS... DRAMA QUEEN
3	MY WIFE IS A GANGSTER
4	VAN HELSING
5	JERSEY GIRL
6	VAN HELSING
7	SCHOOL OF ROCK
8	HAUNTED SPIRIT
9	I WILL SURVIVE
10	KIROT SA DIBDIB
11	MAN ON FIRE
12	VAN HELSING

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	MY WIFE IS A GANGSTER
2	STARSKY & HUTCH
3	I WILL SURVIVE
4	HELLBOY
5	JERSEY GIRL
6	MAN ON FIRE
7	CONFESSIONS... DRAMA QUEEN
8	VAN HELSING

SM CITY STA. MESA
7149522 • 7161416

1	I WILL SURVIVE
2	MAN ON FIRE
3	VAN HELSING
4	KIROT SA DIBDIB
5	VAN HELSING
6	SCHOOL OF ROCK
7	CONFESSIONS... DRAMA QUEEN
8	HELLBOY
9	JERSY GIRL
10	STARSKY & HUTCH

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	VAN HELSING
2	VAN HELSING
3	KIROT SA DIBDIB
4	I WILL SURVIVE

North

SM CITY MARILAO
(044) 933 2013 to 17

1	SCHOOL OF ROCK
2	I WILL SURVIVE
3	CONFESSIONS... DRAMA QUEEN
4	PAYCHECK

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	VAN HELSING
2	VAN HELSING
3	PETER PAN
4	MAN ON FIRE
5	JERSEY GIRL
6	I WILL SURVIVE

SM CITY BAGUIO
(074) 4464585

1	STARSKY & HUTCH
2	SCHOOL OF ROCK
3	LOVE ACTUALLY
4	ACACIA

South

SM CITY LAS PIÑAS
8066688

1	CONFESSIONS... DRAMA QUEEN
2	SCHOOL OF ROCK
3	VAN HELSING
4	JERSEY GIRL
5	MAN ON FIRE
6	HELLBOY
7	I WILL SURVIVE
8	MY WIFE IS A GANGSTER
9	STARSKY & HUTCH
10	KIROT SA DIBDIB

SM CITY BICUTAN
7763055

1	VAN HELSING
2	I WILL SURVIVE
3	CONFESSIONS... DRAMA QUEEN
4	JERSEY GIRL

SM SUPER CENTER SUCAT
8294975

1	MAN ON FIRE
2	I WILL SURVIVE
3	VAN HELSING
4	CONFESSIONS... DRAMA QUEEN

SM CITY BACOOR
(046)4173868

1	MAN ON FIRE
2	SCHOOL OF ROCK
3	VAN HELSING
4	HELLBOY
5	VAN HELSING
6	I WILL SURVIVE
7	JERSEY GIRL
8	KIROT SA DIBDIB

SM CITY LUCENA
(042) 7103977-80

1	TAKING LIVES
2	SCHOOL OF ROCK
3	I WILL SURVIVE
4	HELLBOY

Visayas & Mindanao

SM CITY CEBU
(032) 2313876

1	VAN HELSING
2	VAN HELSING
3	PAYCHECK
4	JERSEY GIRL
5	DEATH CURSE
6	ANIMAL
7	I WILL SURVIVE
8	HELLBOY

SM CITY ILOILO
(033) 3209422

1	ACACIA
2	RESERVED
3	TAKING LIVES
4	I WILL SURVIVE
5	SCHOOL OF ROCK
6	HELLBOY
7	RESERVED
8	ACACIA

SM CITY DAVAO
(082) 2976995

1	PAYCHECK
2	SCHOOL OF ROCK
3	JERSEY GIRL
4	HELLBOY
5	VAN HELSING
6	VAN HELSING

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO (088) 8592864

1	PETER PAN
2	I WILL SURVIVE
3	SCHOOL OF ROCK
4	HELLBOY

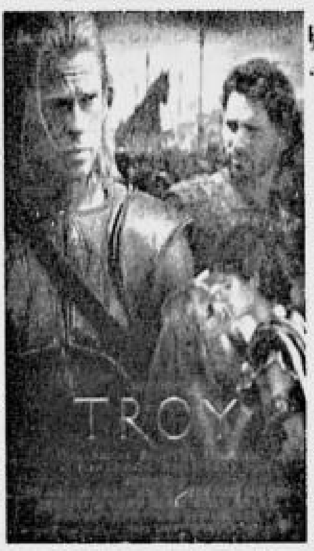
THE PODIUM CINEMA

1
VAN HELSING
11:00 FS/11:20
MF/2:15/5:10/8:05/10:35
LFS/11:00 LMF/1:30 END

2
STARSKY & HUTCH
11:15FS/1:45
MF/2:00/4:15/6:30/8:45/
10:30 LFS/11:00
LMF/12:45 END

For Seat Reservation, call 633 8976
LATE NIGHT SCREENING
DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS

SM CINEMA



Buy your tickets in advance!

Hurry, get your tickets now!

1 day to go!

... guaranteed seats available at:
Megamall | Manila | Sta. Mesa | Fairview | Southmall
Bacoor | Cagayan de Oro | Lucena | Baguio | Marilao

PHOTO EXHIBIT

Don't miss the chance to see the scenes from the movie TROY in a photo exhibit to be held at the SM Megamall Cinema lobby, starting May 2

regular showing | may13 2004
at the SM Cinemas
Subject to MTRCB Rating

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

POPCORN & MOVIE Delights

Get a FREE JUMBO PLAIN POPCORN
when you buy two (2) Movie Tickets

From May 10 to July 8, 2004.
Mondays to Thursday only.

See Posters and flyers for details
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2174 Series of 2004

CINEMAS

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1	VAN HELSING
2	HELLBOY
3	CONFESSION OF DRAMA QUEEN
4	MAN OF FIRE
5	VAN HELSING
6	JERSEY GIRL
7	VAN HELSING
8	I WILL SURVIVE
9	MAY WIFE IS A GANGSTER
10	STARSKY & HUTCH

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72

1	STARSKY & HUTCH
2	VAN HELSING
3	CONFESSION OF DRAMA QUEEN
4	JERSEY GIRL

Masagana CINEMA 2000
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 833.3274

1	KIROT SA DIBDIB
2	VAN HELSING
3	ANIMAL

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	WHOLE 10 YARD
	VAN HELSING
4	KIROT SA DIBDIB
5	

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	VENUS
2	KIROT SA DIBDIB
3	ACACIA
4	HAUNTED SPIRIT
5	VAN HELSING
6	I WILL SURVIVE

star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1	VAN HELSING
2	WHOLE 10 YARD

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 892.2503

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	PETER PAN
2	PAY CHECK

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	
2	
3	
4	

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588
RESERVE

5	
6	
7	
8	
9	

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	ANIMAL
2	KIROT SA DIBDIB
3	RESERVE
4	JERSEY GIRL
5	I WILL SURVIVE
6	VAN HELSING
7	VAN HELSING
8	RESERVE
9	RESERVE

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1	RESERVE
2	
3	
4	
5	

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	RESERVE

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	KIROT SA DIBDIB
Lords	KIROT SA DIBDIB

Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	VAN HELSING
2	KIROT SA DIBDIB
3	VENUS
4	RESERVE

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1	VAN HELSING
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	JERSEY GIRL
5	KIROT SA DIBDIB

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030, 879.2029

1	KIROT SA DIBDIB
2	ANIMA

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta Center
MALL CINEPLEX

1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3	JERSEY GIRL
4	I WILL SURVIVE
5	VAN HELSING
6	TROY
7	TROY

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1	MAN OF FIRE
2	SCHOOL OF ROCK
3	I WILL SURVIVE
4	TROY

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1	I WILL SURVIVE
2	BONE SNATCHERS
3	SCHOOL OF ROCK
4	MAN OF FIRE

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1	I WILL SURVIVE
2	HELLBOY
3	HOSTILE INTENT
4	PASSION OF THE CHRIST

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926

1	I WILL SURVIVE
2	HAUNTED SPIRIT
3	HELLBOY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	I WILL SURVIVE
2	HAUNTED SPIRIT
3	SCHOOL OF ROCK
4	WHOLE 10 YARD

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Binan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	I WILL SURVIVE
2	HELLBOY
3	WHOLE 10 YARD
4	HAUNTED SPIRIT

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) t (045) 9821727

1	PETER PAN
2	I WILL SURVIVE
3	HELLBOY

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1	I WILL SURVIVE
2	PETER PAN
3	MAN OF FIRE
4	STARSKY & HUTCH

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795-3320

1	PAY CHECK
2	I WILL SURVIVE
3	MAN OF FIRE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1	SPARTAN
2	CHECK INN
3	WHOLE 10 YARD
4	NAGHUHUMIYAW

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1	HAUNTED SPIRIT
2	CHECK INN
3	BONE SNATCHERS
4	I WILL SURVIVE
5	TWISTED

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Binan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	I WILL SURVIVE
2	TROY

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	TROY
2	I WILL SURVIVE
3	

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	I WILL SURVIVE
2	HELLBOY
3	STARSKY & HUTCH
4	

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel 520.8914

1	RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	HELLBOY
2	WHOLE 10 YARD
3	MAN OF FIRE
4	STARSKY & HUTCH

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	CHECK-INN
2	TAKING LIVES

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

FESTIVAL CINEMA
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 72
Schedule subject to change without prior notice

SCOOBY-DOO 2
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ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

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Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: I've run a dry cleaning business for 33 years successfully. Now suddenly my chief competitor starts delivery service and he's stealing my business! In a million years, I never saw that coming. You got any tips to teach an old dog how to keep up with the times?

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(Mr. Rosner is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com.)

When it's time to go

By Roberta Chinsky Matuson

CHANGE is difficult for many of us, so we often ignore the signs that indicate it is time to move on. Often, it isn't until a work situation becomes unbearable that we finally decide it's time to change jobs. By the time we reach this point, we feel desperate and are willing to take the next thing that comes along, which might not be any better than the situation we left. If you learn how to recognize the signs that indicate it is time to leave a job, you will be able to plan your next step rather than be forced to make a quick move just to get out. So what are some of these signs you should watch for?

1. Key personnel no longer ask for your opinion.

If you used to be invited to participate in meetings where important decisions were made and you are no longer invited, it may be time to think about your other options. Management may have lost confidence in you. If your opinion is no longer valued, how effective can you be in your role?

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Your company has been grooming you for a better position and has assured you that you are next in line. But they fill the job with an outside candidate. Somewhere along the line, someone has not been totally honest with you. Is this really the type of organization you want to work for? Can you be guaranteed this won't happen again?

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You have always been praised for your work. Now every time you complete a project, you are told you are not meeting expectations. Has there been a change in management lately? Perhaps the new team would like to bring in its own people? Why wait to go out on a bad note? You might want to start putting your feelers out now.

4. The plum assignments keep going to other people.

You are in your job because you want to learn. Yet every time an opportunity comes up for a challenging assignment, it goes to someone else. It is clear that you are the one in the department who will be doing the lower-level work. If you have already mastered those skills and it looks like your situation won't be changing, it may be time to find a position where there is actually room to grow in your job.

5. Your boss tells the staff he is open to suggestions. But is he open to suggestions from you?

You are constantly suggesting how to improve your department. Your suggestions are ignored. It is obvious that your opinion is not being valued. Ask yourself again, why are you still in this job?

6. A larger company is buying out your company.

Although management insists there will be no staff reductions, you will need to look at the reality. Do they really need two of you? Remember, you are much more employable if you are currently working. If you are not willing to move to the new corporate office, then perhaps you should see what other opportunities are available close by.

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Do they know something you don't? Do your best to find out what is really going on and then decide if you should start looking.

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This is perhaps the best sign that it is time to move on. After all, you spend most of your waking hours at work. If you no longer enjoy what you are doing, then why are you still there?

(Reprinted with permission from www.monster.com.)

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

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From page B14

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Family life

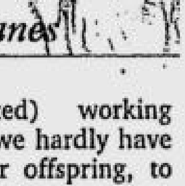
Born in Malabon, Guerrero's first role models were her parents. On top of her most-admired list is Elizabeth Dole, wife of the former US presidential candidate Robert Dole, who served as president of the Red Cross at one time and is now a US senator. Guerrero admires Dole's social orientation, passion for her cause and commitment.

Yet, she is no less committed. Through CEF, Guerrero hopes to do more good and to achieve a higher goal. "I'm not really after material gain," she affirms. "I would like to continue reaching out to the less fortunate, to give back. Real fulfillment lies in giving and sharing."

PHILAM LIFE
takes a
Quantum

PHILAMLIFE FORUM ON SERVICE EXCELLENCE
Internationally acclaimed innovator and motivator Ron Kaufman (second from left) exchanges tokens with Philamlife president and CEO Jose L. Cuisia, Jr. (second from right) during the recently concluded 2004 National Recognition Program at the Edsa Shangri-la hotel. Kaufman conducted a forum on Service Excellence to Philamlife's more than 700 career agents and agency leaders. Also in photo are (left to right) EVP for sales and marketing Josefino R. Sto. Domingo and SVP and chief agency officer Ariel G. Cantos. Philamlife, the largest and most diversified life and general insurance company, is a member of the American International Group, Inc. (AIG), the leading US-based international insurance and financial services organization.

No such thing as hangovers



WORKING MOM

Gina Abuyuan-Llanes

I AM going to take this rare opportunity to complain in a national newspaper. Why? Because I haven't had enough sleep for the past two weeks, my eye bags are beginning to resemble the Marianas Trench, I had carbo for breakfast, and I didn't get to see my daughter perform in her jazz recital last Saturday.

I was in a fashion shoot, you see—no, wait, fashion re-shoot-one that shouldn't have happened if people had only listened to instructions and didn't assume that I would settle for second best. So there we were, at the newly opened Dish in ABS-CBN, racing against time because of the restaurant's pending lunch crowd. We had all believed that we would be wrapped up by, at the latest, 2 p.m., having started at 10 a.m., and having an experienced stylist, talented photographer, and two makeup artists to keep everything at a quick, even pace.

Not.

One of the models, all of 5'9 and 17 years old (made up, of course, to look a decade older), had one too many bottles of Red Horse the night before, had come hung over, and refused to give us Working Mom fashion energy. By the third layout, we were all at our wits end, screaming jokes and jumping around like buffoons just to make her smile. Not even her real-life sister, who was her co-model and who apologized profusely after, could do anything to make the irresponsible brat show her teeth. She was a working mom, too, and had also missed taking her own 6-year-old to ballet practice. Did we feel guilt? Sure. But more than that, I think we both felt, well, short of homicidal.

As working moms—especially extremely busy, single (I'm newly separated) working moms like us—we hardly have time to see our offspring, to spend time with them as regularly as we want to. The routine chore of taking them to ballet class is a thrill for us, to have dinner with them—a proper dinner, mind you, not some rushed drive through at Mc-Do—on a regular basis is something we long for. I've had to adjust my schedule to bond with my kids-it's during the mornings, since my work allows me to come in a little before noon, as the work trails on till late night; whatever extra there is outside of that, is a luxury for me. Not only have I had to adjust my schedule, I've had to adjust my mindset, too. I'm one parent, who still has to play different roles all of the time, even when the kids are with my husband: nurturer, provider, entertainer, tutor, promise-keeper. It's enough to drive a lesser mortal to Carfax District Lunatic Asylum. (Or to have an extra shot of Jack Daniels, make that a double, on the rocks, please.)

Too many roles

So I missed my daughter's jazz recital. I missed her in her black tights and white top, kicking, sliding, LA-walking across the stage. "Ma, I feel so guilty, I want to cry," I texted my mom, who is always there to my rescue. "Ok *lang*, I took lots of photos," my super-heroine texted back, she the model working mom, who had once given up a high-paying engagement in Baguio just to see me dance a watered-down version of an Ifugao raindance when I was in the second grade. "Don't feel bad."

Commitment

But I still feel like I want to throttle the necks of anyone—mom or not, single or not—who feel they can get away with partying the night before and not giving what they committed to for an assignment. I've had bigger hangovers before, and they weren't caused by Red Horse. They were caused by my daughter, when she was three, wanting to watch Nickelodeon, late into the night. They were caused by my twin sons, when they were newborns, needing to be nursed every two hours. And now that they're all of five months and are able to sleep uninterruptedly throughout the night, I still wake up with a start every time either one twitches or fidgets.

But do we working moms flake and frown, even if we're exhausted to the bone and want to drop? No. This is what we do: we put on our designer sunglasses, sweep on the blusher, beam our brightest smile and pour as much passion as we can muster into our work. And for me, that includes firing off this column, rewriting two more stories, and reminding my sittings editors to warn that any model who comes in hung over and refusing to smile should re-think her career.

(Gina Abuyuan-Llanes is usually not this touchy. She is Editor in Chief of Working Mom magazine, which teaches you to enjoy life, love your work and be the best mom you can be. Get the May issue with Charlene Gonzales on the cover, now. Comments are welcome at gina_llanes@abs.pinoycentral.com.)

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TRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

How can you tell the future?

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Bob Rosner

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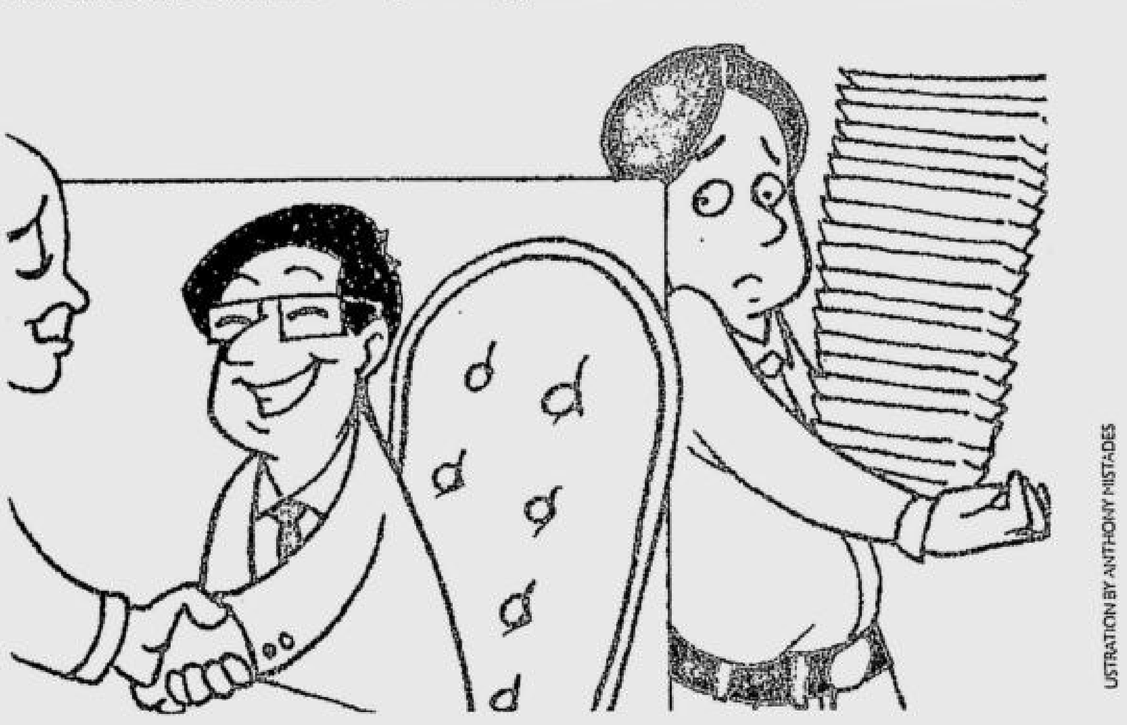

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Family life

Born in Malabon, Guerrero's first role models were her parents. On top of her most-admired list is Elizabeth Dole, wife of the former US presidential candidate Robert Dole, who served as president of the Red Cross at one time and is now a US senator. Guerrero admires Dole's social orientation, passion for her cause and commitment.

Yet, she is no less committed. Through CEF, Guerrero hopes to do more good and to achieve a higher goal. "I'm not really after material gain," she affirms. "I would like to continue reaching out to the less fortunate, to give back. Real fulfillment lies in giving and sharing."

PHIL-AM LIFE

PHILAMLIFE FORUM ON SERVICE EXCELLENCE
Internationally acclaimed innovator and motivator Ron Kaufman (second from left) exchanges tokens with Philamlife president and CEO Jose L. Cuisia, Jr. (second from right) during the recently concluded 2004 National Recognition Program at the Edsa Shangri-la hotel. Kaufman conducted a forum on Service Excellence to Philamlife's more than 700 career agents and agency leaders. Also in photo are (left to right) EVP for sales and marketing Josefino R. Sto. Domingo and SVP and chief agency officer Ariel G. Cantos. Philamlife, the largest and most diversified life and general insurance company, is a member of the American International Group, Inc. (AIG), the leading US-based international insurance and financial services organization.

No such thing as hangovers

WORKING MOM

Gina Abuyuan-Llanes

I AM going to take this rare opportunity to complain in a national newspaper. Why? Because I haven't had enough sleep for the past two weeks, my eye bags are beginning to resemble the Marianas Trench, I had carbo for breakfast, and I didn't get to see my daughter perform in her jazz recital last Saturday.

I was in a fashion shoot, you see--no, wait, fashion re-shoot--one that shouldn't have happened if people had only listened to instructions and didn't assume that I would settle for second best. So there we were, at the newly opened Dish in ABS-CBN, racing against time because of the restaurant's pending lunch crowd. We had all believed that we would be wrapped up by, at the latest, 2 p.m., having started at 10 a.m., and having an experienced stylist, talented photographer, and two makeup artists to keep everything at a quick, even pace.

Not.

One of the models, all of 5'9 and 17 years old (made up, of course, to look a decade older), had one too many bottles of Red Horse the night before, had come hung over, and refused to give us Working Mom fashion energy. By the third layout, we were all at our wits end, screaming jokes and jumping around like buffoons just to make her smile. Not even her real-life sister, who was her co-model and who apologized profusely after, could do anything to make the irresponsible brat show her teeth. She was a working mom, too, and had also missed taking her own 6-year-old to ballet practice. Did we feel guilt? Sure. But more than that, I think we both felt, well, short of homicidal.

As working moms—especially extremely busy, single (I'm newly separated) working moms like us—we hardly have time to see our offspring, to spend time with them as regularly as we want to. The routine chore of taking them to ballet class is a thrill for us, to have dinner with them—a proper dinner, mind you, not some rushed drive through at Mc-Do—on a regular basis is something we long for. I've had to adjust my schedule to bond with my kids-it's during the mornings, since my work allows me to come in a little before noon, as the work trails on till late night; whatever extra there is outside of that, is a luxury for me. Not only have I had to adjust my schedule, I've had to adjust my mindset, too. I'm one parent, who still has to play different roles all of the time, even when the kids are with my husband: nurturer, provider, entertainer, tutor, promise-keeper. It's enough to drive a lesser mortal to Carfax District Lunatic Asylum. (Or to have an extra shot of Jack Daniels, make that a double, on the rocks, please.)

Too many roles

So I missed my daughter's jazz recital. I missed her in her black tights and white top, kicking, sliding, LA-walking across the stage. "Ma, I feel so guilty, I want to cry," I texted my mom, who is always there to my rescue. "Ok *lang*, I took lots of photos," my super-heroine texted back, she the model working mom, who had once given up a high-paying engagement in Baguio just to see me dance a watered-down version of an Ifugao raindance when I was in the second grade. "Don't feel bad."

Commitment

But I still feel like I want to throttle the necks of anyone—mom or not, single or not—who feel they can get away with partying the night before and not giving what they committed to for an assignment. I've had bigger hangovers before, and they weren't caused by Red Horse. They were caused by my daughter, when she was three, wanting to watch Nickelodeon, late into the night. They were caused by my twin sons, when they were newborns, needing to be nursed every two hours. And now that they're all of five months and are able to sleep uninterruptedly throughout the night, I still wake up with a start every time either one twitches or fidgets.

But do we working moms flake and frown, even if we're exhausted to the bone and want to drop? No. This is what we do: we put on our designer sunglasses, sweep on the blusher, beam our brightest smile and pour as much passion as we can muster into our work. And for me, that includes firing off this column, rewriting two more stories, and reminding my sittings editors to warn that any model who comes in hung over and refusing to smile should re-think her career.

(*Gina Abuyuan-Llanes is usually not this touchy. She is Editor in Chief of Working Mom magazine, which teaches you to enjoy life, love your work and be the best mom you can be. Get the May issue with Charlene Gonzales on the cover, now. Comments are welcome at* gina_llanes@abs.pinoycentral.com.)

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PEOPLE at WORK

E-mail: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Raul O. Marcelo**
Subsection Editor **Regina Galang Reyes**

Restaurateur craves to help the out-of-school youth

By Cecile G. Garcia

CAREER TALES

THAT Annie P. Guerrero has earned her place in the food industry can be attested by the success of her ventures. Guerrero owns Cravings, a popular restaurant and bakeshop. She is also the founder and president of the Center for Culinary Arts (CCA), a topnotch cooking school. In addition to these achievements, two years ago, she also earned her place in the non-government organization (NGO) community by founding the Culinary Education Foundation (CEF).

In September 2001, Guerrero launched her centerpiece project, the CEF. She points out that the non-profit organization is an outgrowth of CCA. She explains, "I've always wanted to put up a foundation and I realized the social involvement of the school. CEF was borne out of a cherished dream to provide deserving individuals with the training they need in order to succeed in the food industry." As far as Guerrero is concerned, CEF is a culmination, something that will live long after she's gone.

ANNIE Guerrero and bustling CCA students

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

What is the vision of CEF? "Our vision is to improve the quality of life of deserving individuals by providing culinary education," says Guerrero. What are its goals? "We would like to develop world-class, socially-aware Filipino chefs, to increase awareness of the opportunities in the food industry and to provide technical assistance on food-related services to the community and to grant scholarships for certificate and diploma courses at CCA, Manila."

The foundation has an ongoing three-month training program for out-of-school youth, ages 19 to 25, and offers full and partial scholarship grants annually. It has 54 trainees under its program at present. It has four scholars at the moment and has had eight since its inception.

Fundraising

Guerrero, who takes an active role in CEF, finds that the biggest challenge it presents is raising funds. She avers, "We need money for our scholarship and training programs, and for Food for Life. This is an outreach program that supports non-government organizations and parishes in their feeding projects by providing products made by CCA students."

Fundraising has put their resourcefulness to the test, says Guerrero. "There are various ways," she contends. "We hold benefit dinners and chef's auctions or consultancy services for food businesses. Once in a while, we organize special projects such as culinary flea markets, catering functions and culinary tours." Corporations and funding agencies such as the World Bank, have given CEF a tremendous boost in terms of resources, according to its founder.

As a result of its fundraising efforts, CEF was given the Kyra Award of Excellence in Fundraising. "The Kyra

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Restaurateur craves to help the out-of-school youth

By Cecile G. Garcia

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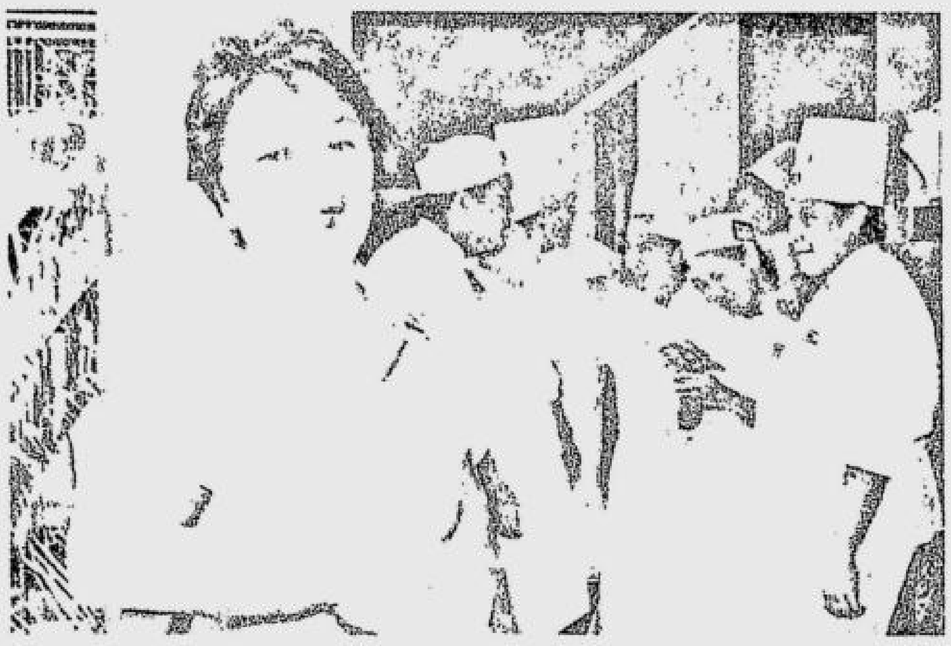

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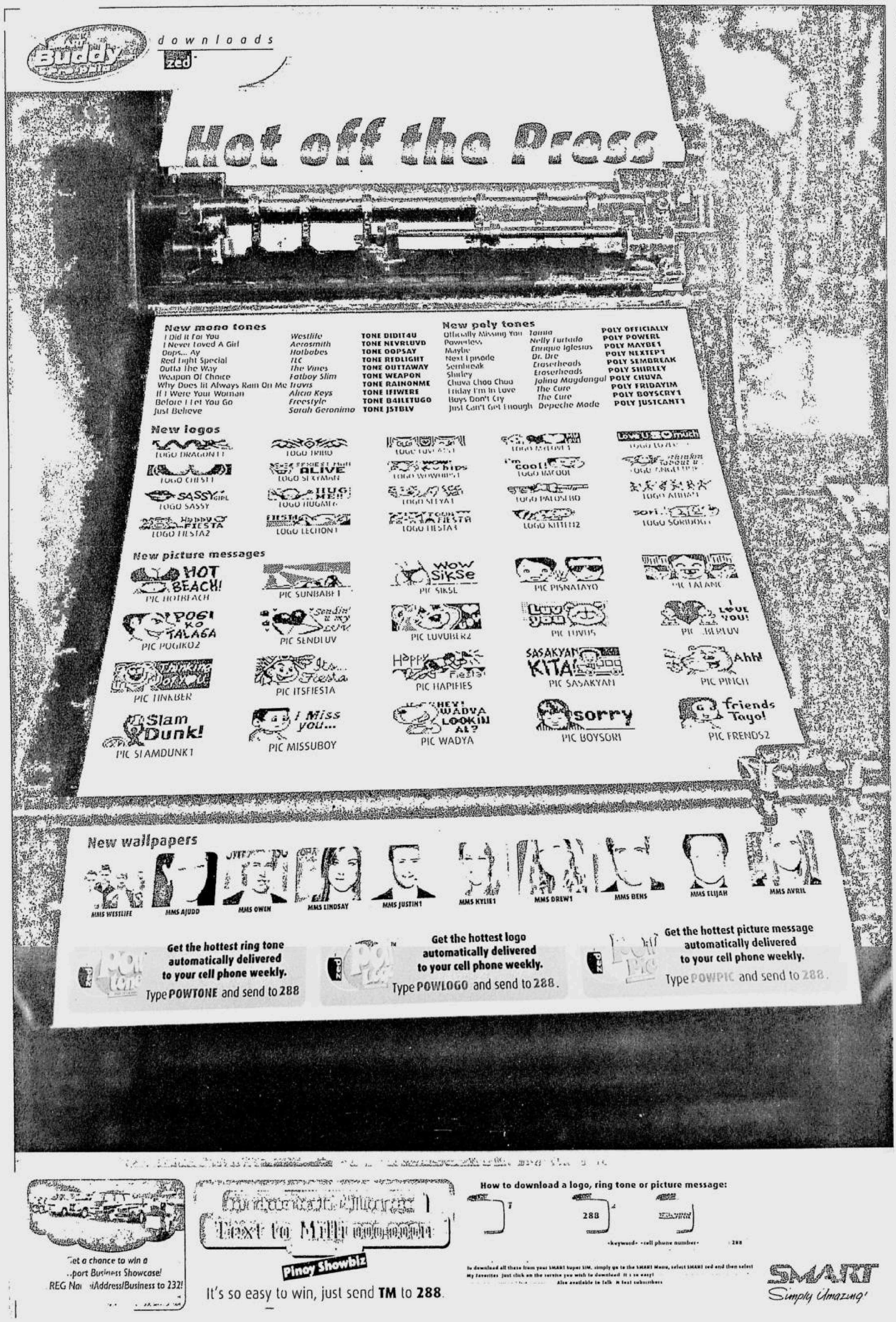

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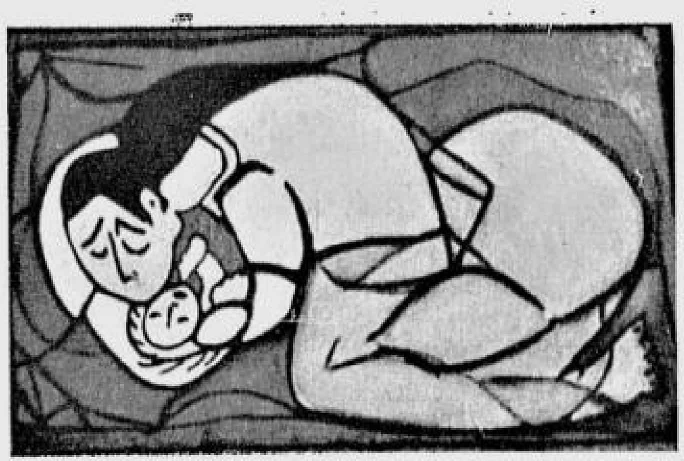

A toast to half of the best duo in the world

By Lemuel Guevara

THERE are two kinds of teenagers—those who always complain about their parents and those who believe they have the best parents in the world.

I fall under the latter group. I'd love to tell you all about both my parents, Larry and Letty, but since this is Mother's Day, I'm just going to tell you about half of what I believe is the best duo when it comes to raising children.

I don't think I can put into words what my mother means to me. It's just not possible, but I'm going to try. I can sincerely say that I am extremely thankful that my mother is the way she is. I think my mom could write a book on the proper ways to bring up a child. She has always stood firm on her belief that the best way to raise her children is to be the kind of parent that the child could easily talk to.

She is probably the most lenient mother out there. My mom makes raising four boys look easy. We always tell our mother everything, and I mean everything. We never need to, as they say, "make *takas*" to go to parties or to go out with our friends. I am 100-percent sure the reason I am close with all of my brothers and with both my parents is because my mother and my father raised us in such a way that even without them having to say it to us countless times, we all knew that family always came first.

My mom would always put her children's interest before hers. She would always be there to support us, to cheer us on, to comfort us, to offer advice and to cheer us up. My mom should have a monument built in her honor for being able to cope with four growing boys and still be able to bring them all together.

I love everything about my mom. I love the way she talks in slang every now and then, the way she always eats dark chocolate after every meal (she always has a stash of it somewhere), and the way she always has her camera ready during family outings.

I love how, no matter how many times she has watched a movie, she always reacts in the exact same way the first time she saw it—laugh, cry, get shocked, you name it. I love how we can talk to her like a true friend...

Well, there are just too many things I love about my mom.

I believe that my mom can happily say that she has lived her life to the fullest. I am proud to have her as my mother. I am proud to tell everyone how much I love my mom, because if I can't be proud of having her as a mother, then I can't be proud of anything at all. She is, in every way, a true mother, and we love her for it.

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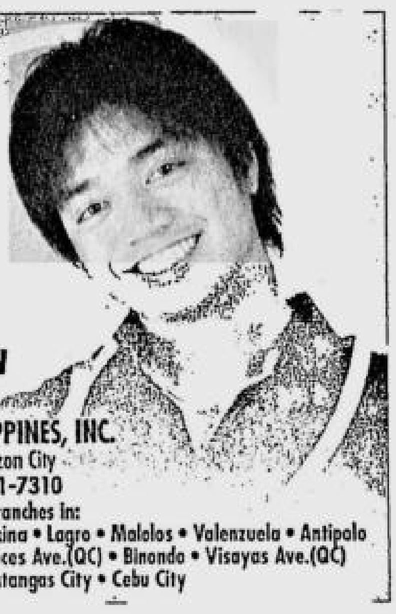

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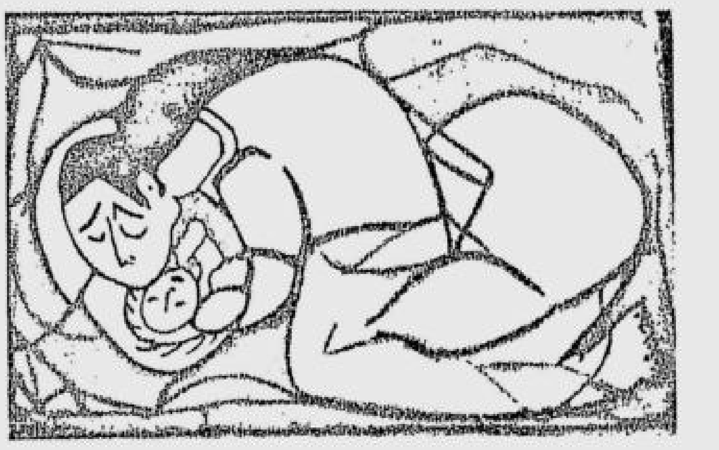

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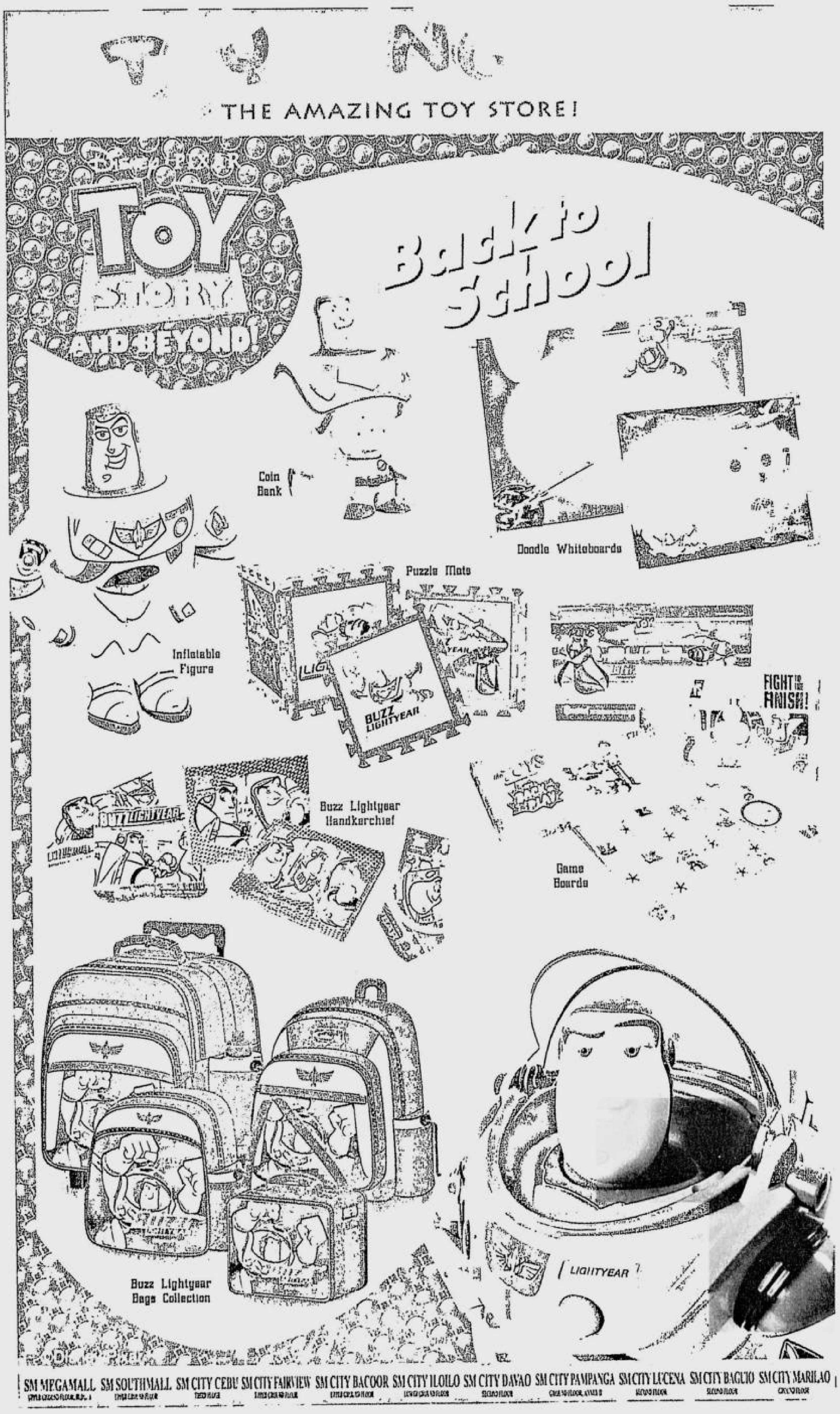
I believe that my mom can happily say that she has lived her life to the fullest. I am proud to have her as my mother. I am proud to tell everyone how much I love my mom, because if I can't be proud of having her as a mother, then I can't be proud of anything at all. She is, in every way, a true mother, and we love her for it.



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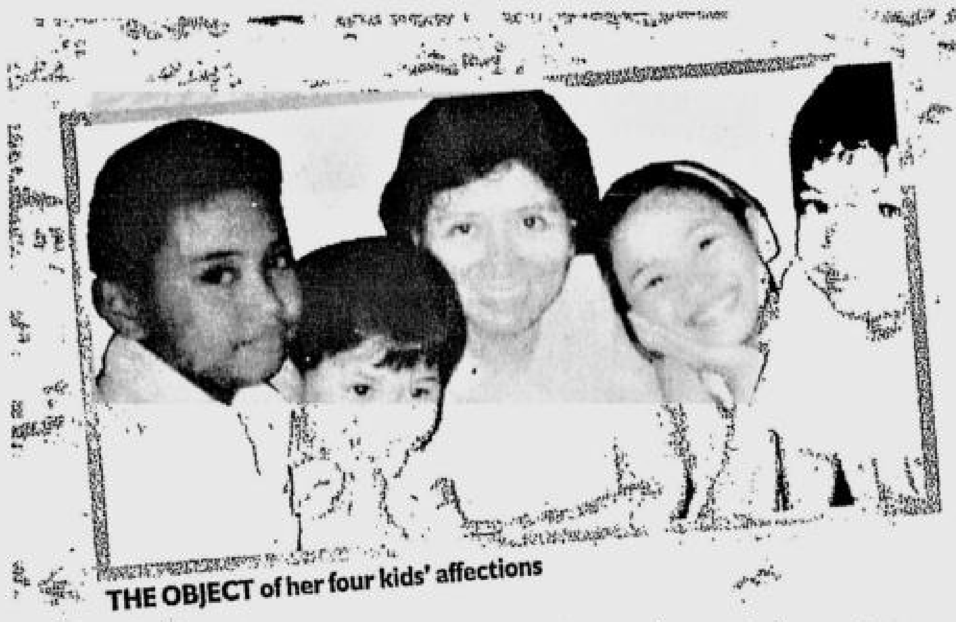


THE OBJECT of her four kids' affections

Appreciating Mom

By Patricia Sarmiento

MY MOTHER is a model of how to live life. We can learn from her mistakes, and be a better person than she is.

Whatever mom does affects our lives. Every sermon in the morning, every joke she delivers, every praise she gives.

I would just like to say sorry for all the things that aren't right for a child to do, considering all the things she does for me. I appreciate everything, even though sometimes I do not show it. I love you, mom.

How could you still be?

For mrs. maria corazon floralde co

To Heart
Beautiful—
how could you still be?
when your sable tresses refuse to stand against the silvers
when your sweet face refuses to lose smudges kissed by a child
when Time refuses to stop drawing lines far beyond your prime...?
Kind—
how could you still be?
when every help you give can be used and abused
when every goodness you sow can still reap the opposite
when every kind word you've spoken could be twisted into lies...?
Strong
how could you still be?
when you have lost your vigor somewhere along your way
when you have lost the allies you've always thought to have
when you have lost the strength to carry the weight of the world...?
Hopeful—
how could you still be?
when you feel the storms tossing you into nothingness
when you feel the light flickering and leaving you to darkness
when you feel God had forsaken you and seems so far away...?
Loving—
how could you still be?
when you know that tears would fall from your eyes unseen
when you know your heart would break with sadness and grief
when you know your love might never be returned...?
How?
How could you still be?
I could die and still never know
Unless I become what you've always been to me
—A mother

MOTHER of three. Esther Tanyag De Guzman, proud mom of Arvin, Reinan and Aissa, with her husband Marciano and her first-born in the late '70s

Leaving a legacy

By Leslie Ann Tan

MY mom had grown up in what I would call a different era. Times were tougher, and money was scarce. As the youngest in a brood of seven, she had no choice but to wear hand-me-down clothes and use hand-me-down books. Her allowance was a paltry P2.

Of course, back then, it was enough to buy a decent *merienda*. It was an era with a different culture. It was absolutely forbidden to talk back to elders, much less to your own parents. And being the pious daughter that she is, my mom never dared to disobey my grandma.

Times have changed. My college allowance was not P2 (mercy!), but more like P200. Of course, with the peso devaluation, in real terms, the difference is not as large. Young people today are also more independent. And I would often find myself arguing my case with my parents in times of disagreement.

Though my mom would occasionally reminisce about the old days, these moments are meant to keep us grounded. Fact is, she has changed with the times. She goes to the gym and treats herself to massages regularly. She watched "Meteor Garden" before I did. And she is insisting we take her to Boracay this summer!

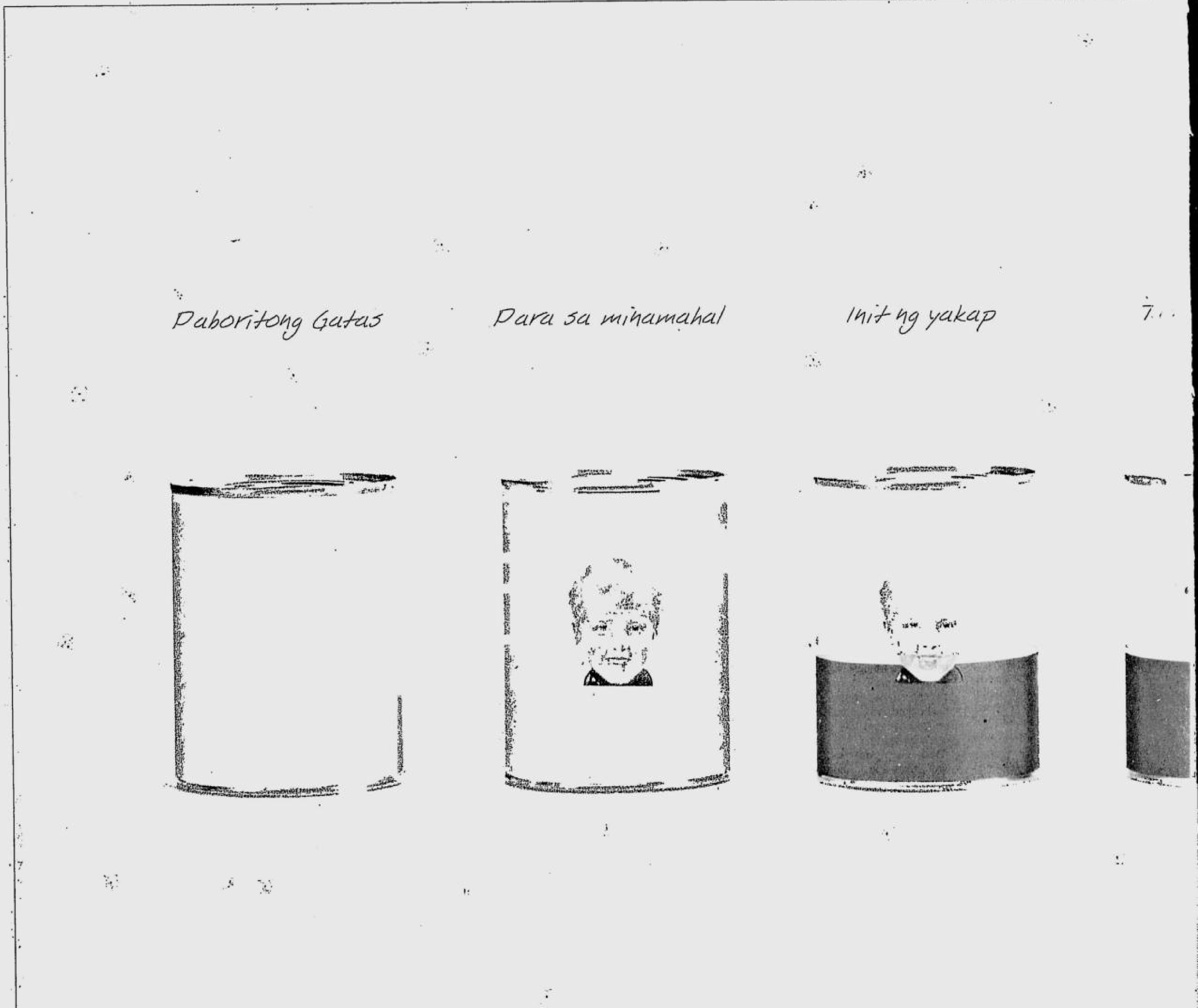
Best of all, though my mom grew up with a strict disciplinarian, she has chosen to rear us with a loose grip—still strict, but not too tight as to choke us. I cannot recall a time when my mom forbade us to engage in any activity. And though I know she would rather have us by her side, she would never hold us back.

When my sister has to take business trips abroad, my mom would always pray for her safety and wait by the phone. When my brother stays out late, she can never fall into a deep sleep, and often waits up until the wee hours.

In all my years of growing up, I have always taken comfort in the fact that whatever happens to me out there, I can go home to a great family and be happy. I believe it is with this thought of a safe harbor that I have dared to explore great distances, great depths, and great heights.

They say there are three ways to leave a legacy: plant a tree, write a book, or touch the life of a child. My mom has chosen the third and hardest way. Not just for me and my siblings, but also for all those who became her students in her 17 years of teaching.

Happy Mother's Day, Ma! We love you.



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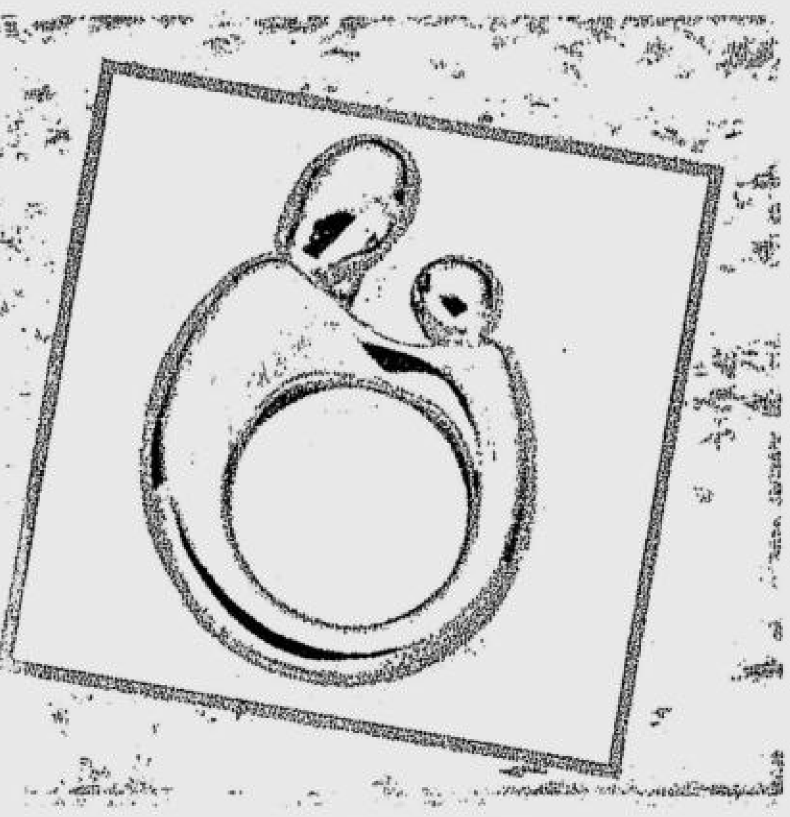
My Mother's Day gift a year too late

By Amy Rose C. Austria



"SORRY Mama, we weren't able to buy you a gift for Mother's Day," I said to her.

She replied, "It's okay, you're taking care of me and that's enough."

That was one year ago. A few weeks after, my mother died. She died while I was in Katipunan, reviewing for my college entrance exams.

The past year has been the hardest. It was worse than the year before that, when my mom was sick. Last year was harder than the times when I would wear a mask whenever I came within five feet of her or when she would go in and out of the hospital for her blood transfusions.

It was much worse than the time I would sit in her room watching over her for hours, when I would get the trash can every time she felt nauseous because of the chemotherapy, or when I would bathe her and wash her. It was hell compared to the time when I couldn't do anything but watch her gasp for air, unable to talk, with tubes down her throat and tears in her eyes.

Last year was the worst. Because last year my mom wasn't there... and last year I really wanted to take care of her.

One of the things I really miss about my mother was how game she was for everything. She would host parties, crack jokes with my friends, dance like she was alone, and do things I used to think were embarrassing.

I graduated last March and after the Baccalaureate Mass, some of the parents went on stage to sing. I watched them look at their daughters with pride while singing "I Will Be Here." I watched my batchmates blush in embarrassment when the parents sung "Ocho Ocho."

I knew right there and then that if my mom were alive, she would have been the first one on the stage and the best "Ocho Ocho" dancer in the group. I started to cry because I missed her, and because I was jealous of all my friends who had their moms dancing on stage. But, most of all, I cried because I knew she was there, singing along, telling me that she would always be here for me.

Sometimes I feel like hugging one of my aunts or telling my *lola* about my new crush. I miss my mother's smell, her voice and what it was like to hug her. Sometimes I dream about her and it feels so real that I don't want to wake up.

I miss my mother... Even if she was always telling me to clean my room and be more responsible, and even if it was such a hassle to take care of her when she got cancer.

I miss her because she was the one who took care of me for 16 years. I wish she was still here so I could return the favor and take care of her, too.

> If mom were alive during my graduation, I'm sure she'd be the first one on stage

Missing my 'laundrywoman'

By Sam Marcelo
2bU! Correspondent

MY FAMILY has never been overtly affectionate. For some reason, any sort of affection has to be tempered with biting humor, or anything that serves to limit wishy-washy sentiment.

To ask for a hug, you must have a problem hanging over your head like the sword of Damocles.

I was away doing fieldwork once when my mother sent me a text message. It's still in my phone: "How are you?" it said. "I miss my dishwasher."

Ah, yes. That's a classic... Dishwasher? My mother misses my brilliant dishwashing skills. That's all?

My reply? "I'm fine, I miss my laundrywoman."

I want to take this opportunity to tell the world how much I love my "laundrywoman." My clothes won't be as clean, soft or fragrant without you, Ma.

> My mother sent me a text message once. 'How are you?' it said. 'I miss my dishwasher.'

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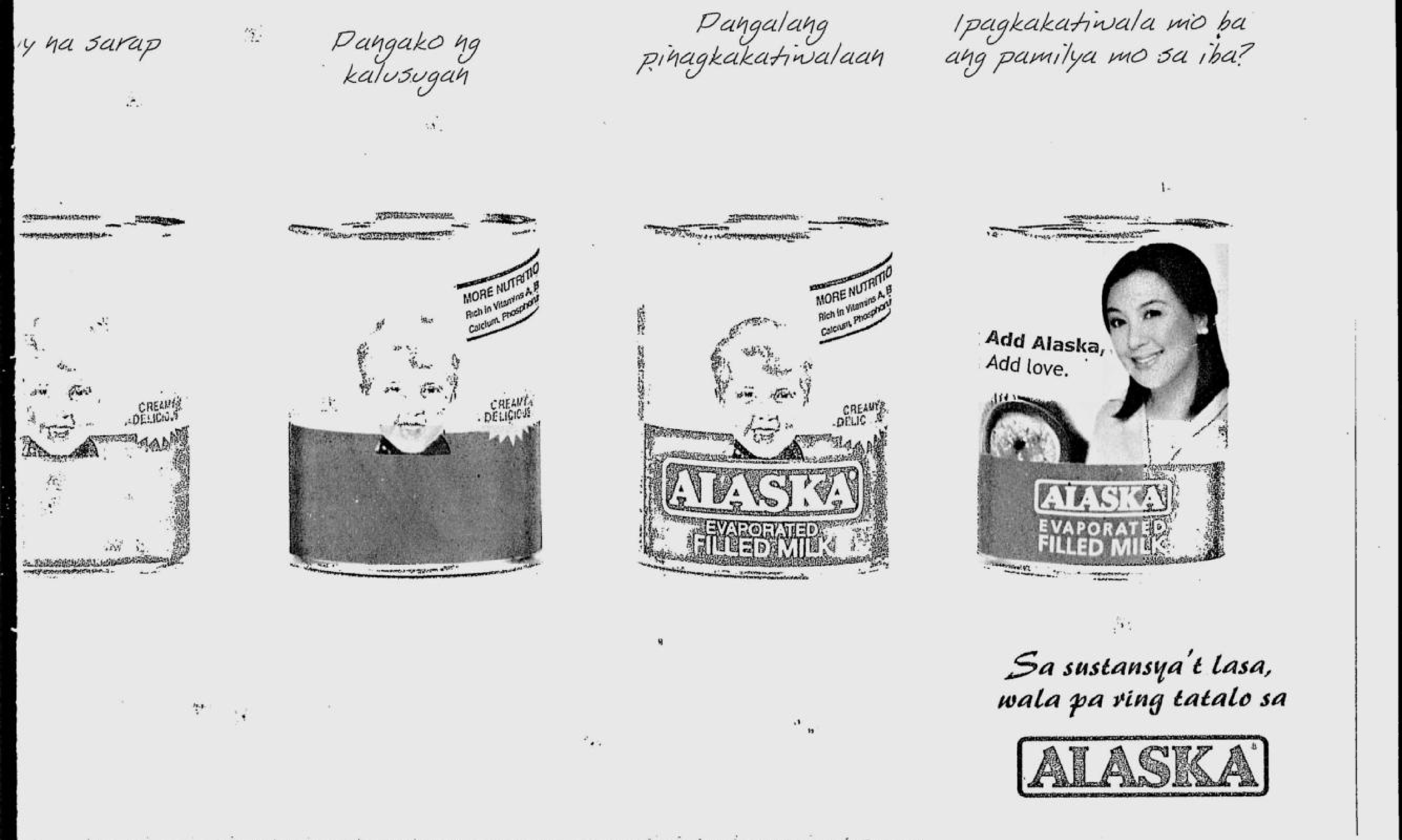
y na sarap
Pangako ng kalusugan
Pangalang pinagkakatiwalaan
Ipagkakatiwala mo ba ang pamilya mo sa iba?
Add Alaska, Add love.
Sa sustansya't lasa, wala pa ring tatalo sa
ALASKA

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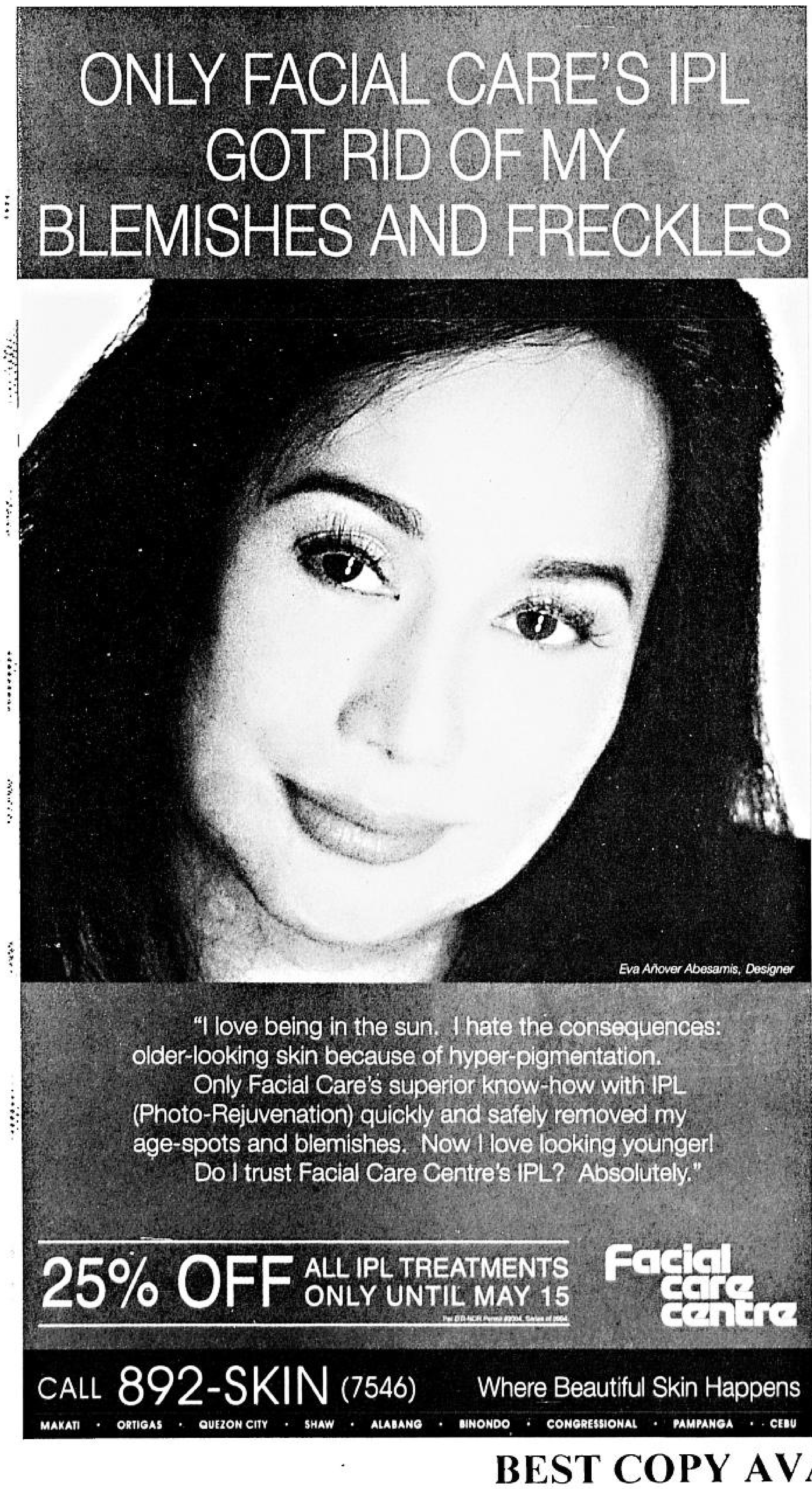
ONLY FACIAL CARE'S IPL GOT RID OF MY BLEMISHES AND FRECKLES

Eva Añover Abesamis, Designer

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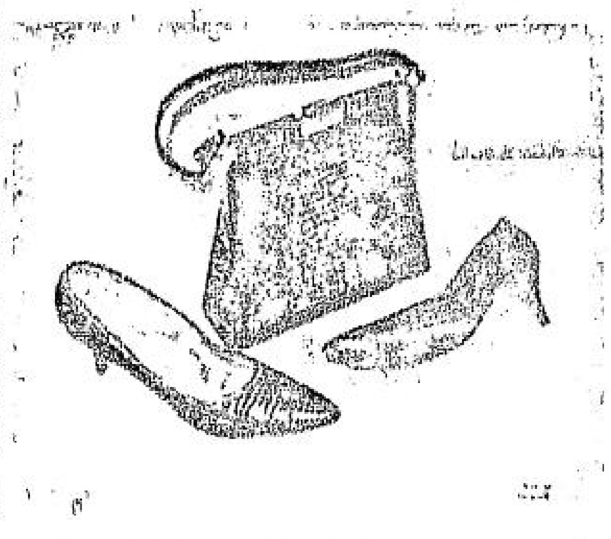
Motherless on Mothers' Day

By Eila-Irene B.S., as told to Niño Mark M. Sablan

I ALWAYS thought I had a happy family. Now I know for a fact that we were. But that's all in the past now.

Mom was a dentist while dad was a security officer. Although their joint income wasn't that much, we survived every day and even managed to go out on weekends. We did a lot of family stuff. We'd eat out, watch movies and go to Mass. We were very happy. We looked really happy. And I never thought anything horrible would happen to us. But something did.



Five months ago, mom ran away with a lesbian, taking with her my little sister. She said they were just friends, until my little sister told me she saw them passionately kissing. She said she left our dad and not us, but the reality is she knew we wouldn't live with her lesbian lover, and still she continued to live with her despite knowing our stand.

She said she and Papa had marital problems, but she didn't bother to let us in so we'd know and understand. It's not as if we were five-year-olds.

Although my little sister is young enough to be brainwashed and lured by material things, my older brother and I know better. We know the truth. We know why she supposedly turned homosexual. We know why she left Papa. We know why she can stand not seeing me and my brother. We know what's making her happy. We know why she's with her rich lesbian lover.

A month ago, while I was eating fishballs at a street corner with my boyfriend, a vehicle stopped in front of us. The windows rolled down to reveal my mom and her lesbian lover. My mom said, "*pamano naman*," forcing her hand into my forehead. She said, "*payakap naman*," and I shook my head.

She went on rambling about how I was a bad daughter and that I wasn't grateful, blah blah blah. And I asked her what kind of a mother she was. How could she leave us? How could she spread lies about me and my dad? How could she not understand that the way I was treating her was simply a reaction to her own choices? It was just one of the many consequences of her actions.

After a cinematic exchange of quotable quotes, she said goodbye and told me how much she loved me. After the vehicle sped away, I cried. I hoped she didn't see me. I had to stay strong and rude and brave when in front of her. I've chosen to show her that her choices have consequences.

This year was our first Mother's Day without her. I miss her so much and I just pray that she'd come back to us soon. While there's still time. While Papa hasn't found anyone to replace her yet. While we're still not that distant and angry.

I know my mom's lesbian lover will just leave her when she finds someone fresher, younger and more beautiful. My mom, after all, just replaced someone who used to be the lesbian's all-time love. I just hope she'll wake up from all this soon. I hope next Mother's Day, she'd be back with us. With me, my brother and my dad.

And I hope she won't forget to bring along my sister.

What a mom is

By Michelle M. Sta. Romana

I MAY not be the child
you have dreamed about,
I may not be the child you
have prayed to become,
and I have made a lot
of mistakes, no doubt.
But even if I have been
that way, you were always
there to stay.
Through all these difficulties,
bumpy roads, I wasn't left
alone, I know, though problems
weighed on my shoulders,
you carried some for me,
and drove me out to the
smooth, peaceful road.
When I was groaning in pain,
you came and drove it all away.
You helped me stand up,
and walked with me in the
dark lane, lighting it up
with love and joy.
Even if I'm too big now to be
rocked in your arms,
though I can walk on my own,
I am always welcomed in your arms,
as I am the child you have
waited to love and care for.

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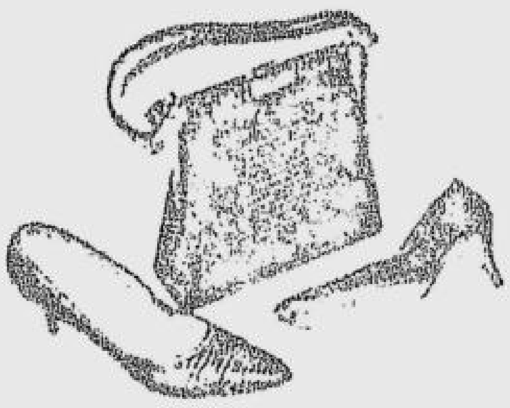

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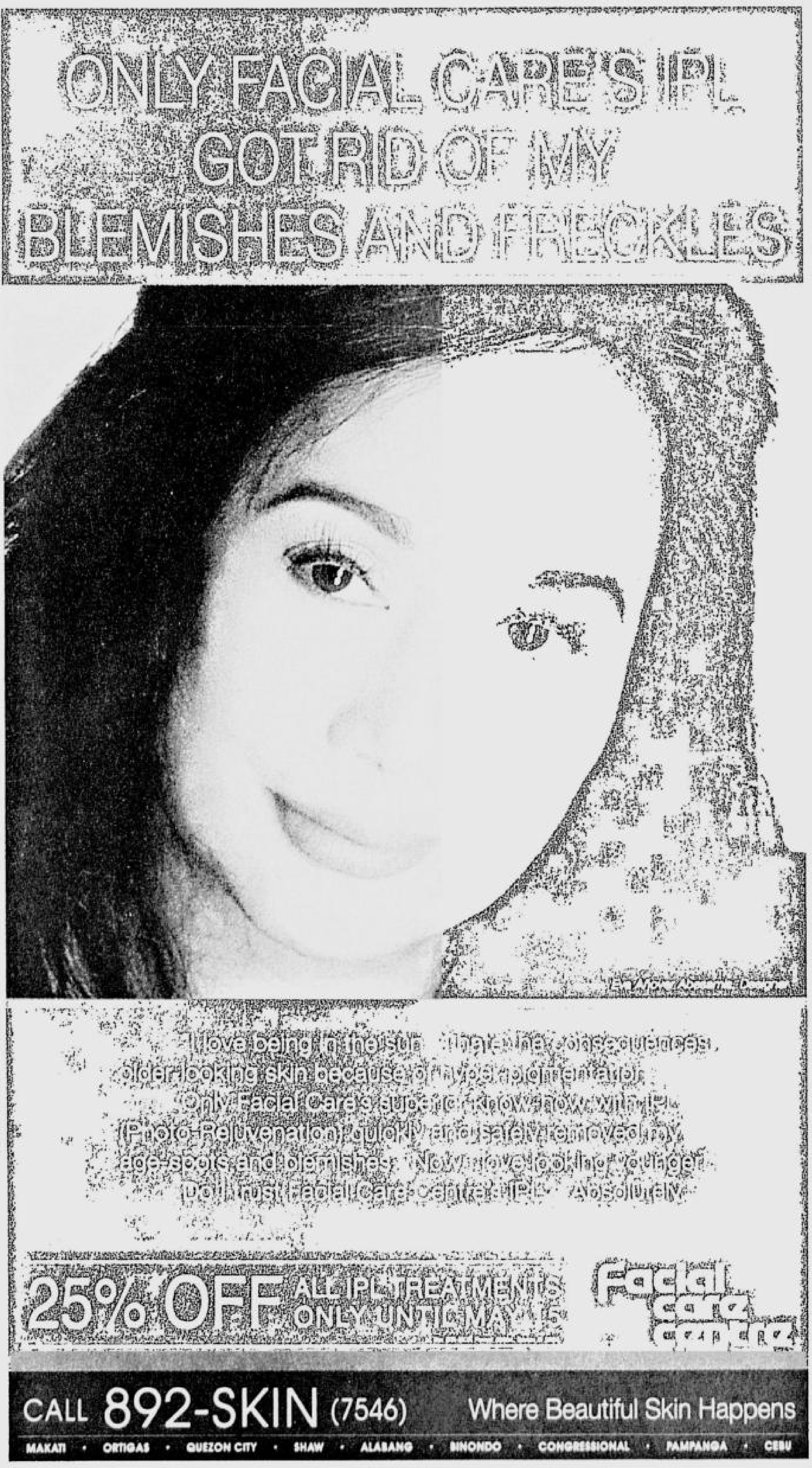
And I hope she won't forget to bring along my sister.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you carried some [illegible] me,
and drove me out to th
smooth, peaceful road
When I wa [illegible] groa [illegible] ng in pair
you came and drove it all away.
You helped me stand up,
and walked with me in the
dark lane [illegible] hti [illegible] it up
with love [illegible]
Even if I'm t [illegible] o be
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though I c [illegible] own.
I am alway [illegible] arms
as I am the [illegible]
waited t [illegible] for

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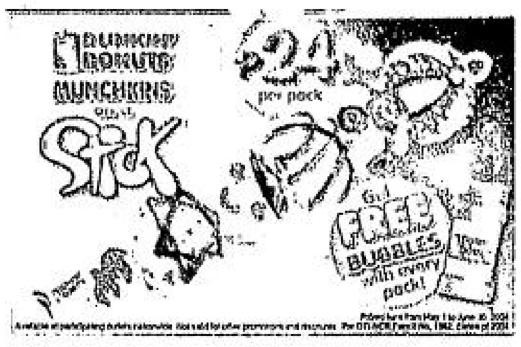


This day's for me, too

By Angela Aveo Noriega

THIS Mothers' Day was the first time I celebrated it as a mother. I gave birth to a baby girl last March 27, and let me tell you, motherhood is something else.

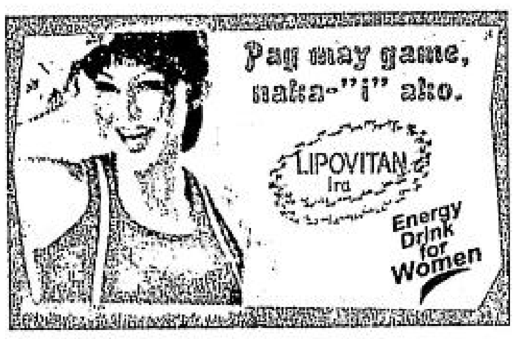
The first time I saw my baby girl was when she was placed in my tummy after her umbilical cord was cut. That moment alone was overwhelming. I had all kinds of mixed emotions: happiness, amazement, excitement, you name it, I felt it.

They later brought my little one and finally left me alone with her. At that point, I got scared. I mean, how was I supposed to take care of this little creature who weighed less than 10 lbs? I didn't even want to hold her because I was scared I might break her. That may sound ridiculous but it's true.

Fast forward to a month and two weeks later, and here I am, exhausted from lack of sleep at night, losing weight because I'm actually forgetting to eat, and yet, with all the puffy eyes and the aching tummy, I'm still giddy and happy because every look from her, every little smile, even her crying, breaks my heart all over again and makes me fall in love with her more. She is worth it.

MY ticket to motherhood

> Every
> look
> from her,
> every
> little
> smile,
> even her
> crying,
> breaks
> my heart



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2. ROASTING SUCH AS ASADO, PEKING DUCK, ETC.- 5 MEETINGS - MAY 19 (1:30-3:30 PM) 20 (9:30-11:30AM, then 1-3PM), 21 (9:30-11:30 AM then 1-3 PM).
3. HOW TO TREAT & COOK SEA CUCUMBER & DRIED SHARK'S FIN - MAY 24 (1:30-3:30PM), MAY 25 (9:30-11:30AM, then 1-3PM)
4. DIMSUM #8 - 12 RECIPES SUCH AS KUCHAY BOX, CHICKEN PIE, ETC. - 4 MEETINGS, MAY 26,27,28,29 (9:30-11:30 AM)
5. RICE TOPPING - 12 RECIPES, 3 MEETINGS, MAY 26,27,28 (1:30-3:30PM)

ONE MEETING LESSONS:

MAY 14	Fri	AM	Dimsum Chicken Feet, Spicy Spare Ribs, Almond Gulatin.
17	Mon	PM	Sp. Class-Stuffed 8 Treasures Chicken, Hairy Melon w/ Vermicelli, Steamed Fresh Squid w/ Curry, Hot & Sour Soup.
18	Tue	AM	Kikiam, Chicken & Prawns on Hot Salad, Fresh Fruits or Sago Pudding
		PM	Sp. Class - Authentic Xiamen Lumpia, Duck In Salt Water Ham Sandwiched in Winter Melon

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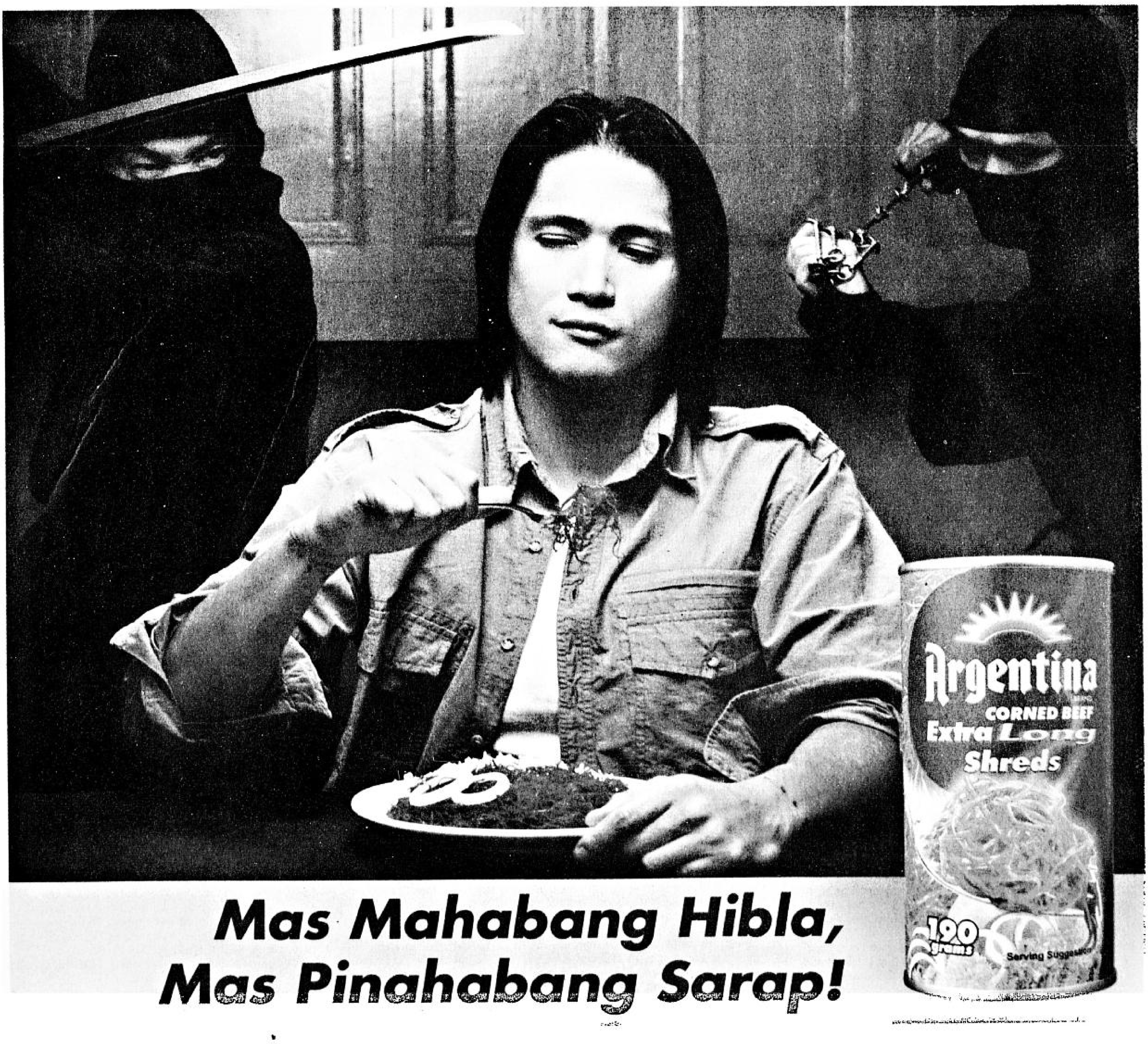

Gerascophobic mama

WATCH out, "American Idol"!

By Anna Elvira S. Arcellana

WORD of the day: Gerascophobia. Fear of growing old.

No one believes she's actually turning 49 in two months. No one believes she's not an image model of some fitness center. No one believes she's not a dancer by profession. No one believes she's not some model or actress on TV. No one believes she's my mother!

Well, honestly, I can't blame them. Mama can pass off as some teen pop idol. Her get-up is the major factor in creating this "deceiving image." She wears the coolest outfits in the world (coolest, by the standard of girls my age), in tandem with her bubbly personality.

Shocking galore (an expression she often uses, by the way) fact #1: She has more sleeveless, tube, backless outfits and mini-skirts than I have. She's actually the one who forces me to wear those kinds of clothes. Well, I simply can't, I get too conscious wearing those outfits! But Mama clearly has the confidence and star-like projection to carry off the style.

Also, take note of her blouses with the imprint "Sexy Girl." Girl? Well, I think Mama is already stuck in this fantasy, maybe for eternity. Because people already perceive her as this teen fashion model!

Shocking galore fact #2: During her visits to my school, mouths drop open! "Tita, your clothes are so cool! I can't help but say it... I'm in love with your pants!" She is simply treated as a star in high school! Well, she is actually popular there because of her active participation in student-parent activities. Beauty, brains, and leadership... what more can I ask for?

Because she is simply gerascophobic, the gym is Mama's second home. Where else can you preserve youthful beauty? After a tedious day of work for my future, she rushes to the gym to burn those excess calories and build that appealing figure. And of course, she shines as the brightest in the circle of dancing queens!

The passion of youth is burning stronger inside my mom than in mine, truthfully. She says that exercise is her priority because she wants to "age with grace." I remember how every summer, she would relentlessly drag me to the gym, inculcating in me the significance of exercise to sustain good shape and health.

As I'm actually the lazy type, Mama pushes me to the treadmill and gives me a lecture on how exercising frequently can gradually eliminate my sluggishness.

Yes, she's one of those rare parents who appreciate what being a teenager is like. I do not see her as an authoritarian terror who has this reflex tendency to misunderstand the sensitive issues I am facing as an adolescent. On the contrary, I see her as the 24-hour best friend who I can talk to or fool around with anytime.

The best thing that Mama knows how to create is balance. Balance in terms of instilling discipline along with other core values, and at the same time, projecting a charismatic and approachable nature.

Word for the day: Gerascophobia, the fear of growing old

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But, each day I live, I will never forget what my classmates once told me, which remains the greatest truth in my life: "Anna, you have the coolest mom in the world!"

MY school "mom," Delia Tantuico

A mentor's mothering

By Tammy David
2bU! Correspondent

IN high school, every time I had problems, I would run to my favorite teachers or counselors since they are tagged as "second mothers." But when I entered college, it was a bit difficult looking for that motherly figure in the university. Professors didn't seem to care, and it was hard to look for somebody to trust, unlike my old teachers who practically saw me grow up.

The good thing in my school now is each student has an assigned mentor. The mentor is somebody from the faculty who checks on the student's schoolwork and, sometimes, personal life.

During my freshman year, I didn't go to a single mentoring session since I relied on friends. On my sophomore year, which is said to be the most crucial year, I decided to give "mentorship" a try.

I was assigned a mentor, but knowing my stubborn self, I asked the faculty to give me another one. I chose one of the renowned figures in the University, lawyer Delia Tantuico, who happened to be the head of the Registrar's office.

Almost everybody feared her because of her "terror" persona and direct-to-the-point attitude. I barely knew her, so it wasn't unlike choosing Margaret Thatcher to be my mentor/mother.

I remember before she officially became my mentor that I ran to her office after Theology class. I begged her to transfer me to another block since I feared the priest who was teaching us. Miraculously, I didn't lie by giving the usual excuses like my block sucks or it would affect my schedule. I flat out told her that I was aware of the teacher's "mortality rate" and my fear that I might not able to get through his legendary exams.

"Remember if you fail this class, you can never, ever transfer again, ever!" she told me after I was able to transfer to the other block. Because I feared her so much, I was able to get a high grade in my Theology class.

So I made it a point to have mentoring sessions with her as part of my school year resolutions. Like a bully bragging about going to the neighborhood haunted house, I would brag to my friends that I had the most feared campus figure as my mentor, while I would end up shaking before entering her office.

But with each session, she became less and less the "evil headmistress" and more and more the understanding mother who encouraged her child without being too pushy, who listened without being judgmental. She did not demand from me much, but I felt I was pressured not to fail her since she would take time to check on me as a mentor.

I can say having her as my mentor paid off, because the sessions kept me on my toes, and her words—"Sophomore year separates the good from the bad!"—always rang in my head whenever I felt like giving up.

So when I heard that I passed my application to Management and sophomore year, I did not call my friends or my parents first, I automatically called "Attorney" since I felt I owe it to her.

I've put writing on hold for now since I'm concentrating on school. But with Mother's Day, I feel I should thank this motherly figure I finally found in college. Happy Mother's Day, Attorney!

My golden girl

LOLA with her fave *apo*

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

MY parents had me during their high school years, back when they were their impulsive, immature and irresponsible selves.

After two more screaming infants and with furniture volleying between my mom and dad, they finally decided to put an end to all the fights, and separated.

Due to both parties' undeniable incapabilities, my mom kept her youngest and moved back in with her parents, while my dad surrendered me and my brother to his mother. Since my father eventually got stuck in rehab and my mother went to the United States for dollars, the only parent I was left with was my *lola*. I grew up under her wing, and for this I send flying kisses to God.

My *lola* didn't go to school, but she certainly ain't a dum-dum. She's witty and smart and diligent. And even if the right side of her body is paralyzed now because of a stroke, she has never sulked in one corner and considered herself useless. In fact, she functions just like everybody else and has even learned to write using her left hand, just to prove she's no less of a person even after her stroke.

She lectures me on being a responsible citizen, scolds me when I don't come home and expresses her desire for my Mohawk to grow back to the normal 'do I sported before that. Yes, we do have gaps and lots of moments when eyebrows scrunch, but it's not as if we're Itchy and Scratchy. There are actually lots of stuff this *lola-apo* tandem agrees on—like eating frozen Baby Ruth bars, flipping through stacks and stacks of magazines and listening to the hits of the Sex Bomb Dancers.

Warm and nurturing

Just like other grandmothers (and mothers too), my *lola* is a warm nurturing figure, and this is one of my favorite things about her. She is thoughtful, always considerate of my feelings and always after my welfare. She makes sure I am safe and happy. And full.

I know I'm gonna start to sound like every grandchild in the whole world, but I just have to let it out: my *lola* is the very best cook in the whole solar system. The food that she whips up will make you want to gorge yourself.

I know that all grandmothers are awarded the Best Cook plaque by their grandchildren but I just have to hand over the crown, scepter, sash and bouquet to my *lola*. She never follows recipes and does everything according to her heart. She may skimp on ingredients since she's a frugal soul, but the dish still turns out worthy of a rating of 101 serving spoons or *sandok*. Imagine what wonders she could evoke if she had the money to buy expensive and high-quality ingredients!

Still on being thoughtful and a good cook, I remember how my *lola* tirelessly prepared my *baon* for school from my first grade up. My classmates drooled with envy until sixth grade, when I decided to try to be cool and buy cafeteria food instead. Which, to be honest, sucked.

My *lola* is also the sweetest soul on earth. She is not afraid to show and tell me how much she loves me, and there is no doubt that she loves unselfishly, unconditionally.

There was one time when my *lola* offered me her last P10 so I could buy medicine for my headache. I hesitated but eventually accepted the money to buy myself a couple of tablets. Later that day, I found out she herself needed medicine for her own pain. I scampered for coins and didn't stop until I was able to buy her what she needed.

Every time I remember that incident, I am reminded of how lucky I am to have someone like my *lola*. Someone who loves me no matter how many pimples mushroom on my face. Someone who loves me no matter what.

Salty tears

In high school, I actually wanted to be independent by living with a bunch of strangers. I remember the pure excitement that moonwalked into my daydreams whenever I thought of the great stuff I'd experience once I was on my own.

Of course, I didn't spill anything to my beloved *lola*, believing she would stop me from actually fulfilling one of my dreams. The day I had to move out, I told her all about it and unlike what I thought, she didn't hinder my plans. She wished me all the luck and recited a litany of things I should remember. But she almost flooded the garage with her salty tears.

That might've been a ploy or maybe it was something sincere, but whatever the case, it did the trick. I unpacked and stayed—and never regretted the decision. In fact, I believe I learned about independence, care of my *lola*. She never really bluntly taught me everything, even if she knew I had to do some learning quick. She left me to my own devices to solve my own problems. But she was always there in case I needed support.

I learned a lot from my dear *lola* even if she didn't whip out a blackboard and a piece of chalk. She was just being herself, and doing so was such a learning experience for me.

One of the many things I've learned, simply by spending time with her, is that it is always good to be good. Being kind and helpful to others will keep one's soul healthy and there's just that incomparable tingling feeling inside you when you know you've made another soul happy.

Sending out positivity will guarantee the return of such, and my *lola* generated lots of it. She believed in karma and the golden rule. She didn't want any negativity in life so she refrained from hurting others.

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I have somehow graduated from being a *lola*'s boy. I live on my own now and I just miss her to bits. My little sister is the one who currently lives with her and I'm so ecstatic because she's getting the privilege of growing up with such a special soul the way I did.

Our real mother may be away from us, but I'm very thankful there is someone who has taken her place. Mothers are the best, and I'm just thankful my grandmother continues to be a mother to me to this very day.

Throw away Cosmo, and other words of wisdom from my mom

By Bituin G. Biglang-awa

MY mom brought me up as a single parent. She and my dad separated when I was young. Even though she is abroad most of the time to study or work, she makes sure that she gives me enough attention.

She is not strict with me; she believes that being too uptight will cause me to rebel. Thus, she imposes no curfew on my going out at night. But I also make sure I do not abuse her trust.

Even though I grew up with a liberated parent, my values are intact because she gave me the chance to evaluate circumstances on my own. Cliched as it may sound, being an only child makes her my sister, best friend, and mother all rolled into one beautiful package.

Almost two years ago, my boyfriend and I broke up. Mom was in the United States then and lectured me via e-mail that there were many more boys in the world and I only had to make myself "crushable" or likeable to the opposite sex.

In order to be "crushable," according to my mom, one must remember the following:

1. Don't be too self-conscious
2. Don't be "trying hard"
3. Listen to your mother
4. Be interesting. To be interesting, you must follow your own interests and do well in class. To do well in class, do your homework as soon as you get it. And do not do it over the phone. Do it yourself, then ask other people's help or opinion.
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6. Do not make *telebabad. Papuputol ko ang linya, sige ka.*
7. Don't read Cosmopolitan because it's not for your age group. It will only confuse you. Please throw away all my Cosmopolitan magazines. You should read materials with more variety. I can only read Cosmo because I've read a lot of other books and magazines on different topics. You might think only men are important. That is not true. Repeat after me, there are more important things in life than boyfriends (1,000,000 times or more).
8. I love you and you should listen to me.

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Gerascophobic mama

By Anna Elvira S. Arcellana

WORD of the day: Gerascophobia. Fear of growing old.

No one believes she's actually turning 49 in two months. No one believes she's not an image model of some fitness center. No one believes she's not a dancer by profession. No one believes she's not some model or actress on TV. No one believes she's my mother!

Well, honestly, I can't blame them. Mama can pass off as some teen pop idol. Her get-up is the major factor in creating this "deceiving image." She wears the coolest outfits in the world (coolest, by the standard of girls my age), in tandem with her bubbly personality.

Shocking galore (an expression she often uses, by the way) fact #1: She has more sleeveless, tube, backless outfits and mini-skirts than I have. She's actually the one who forces me to wear those kinds of clothes. Well, I simply can't, I get too conscious wearing those outfits! But Mama clearly has the confidence and star-like projection to carry off the style.

Also, take note of her blouses with the imprint "Sexy Girl." Girl? Well, I think Mama is already stuck in this fantasy, maybe for eternity. Because people already perceive her as this teen fashion model!

Shocking galore fact #2: During her visits to my school, mouths drop open! "Tita, your clothes are so cool! I can't help but say it... I'm in love with your pants!" She is simply treated as a star in high school! Well, she is actually popular there because of her active participation in student-parent activities. Beauty, brains, and leadership... what more can I ask for?

Because she is simply gerascophobic, the gym is Mama's second home. Where else can you preserve youthful beauty? After a tedious day of work for my future, she rushes to the gym to burn those excess calories and build that appealing figure. And of course, she shines as the brightest in the circle of dancing queens!

The passion of youth is burning stronger inside my mom than in mine, truthfully. She says that exercise is her priority because she wants to "age with grace." I remember how every summer, she would relentlessly drag me to the gym, inculcating in me the significance of exercise to sustain good shape and health.

As I'm actually the lazy type, Mama pushes me to the treadmill and gives me a lecture on how exercising frequently can gradually eliminate my sluggishness.

Yes, she's one of those rare parents who appreciate what being a teenager is like. I do not see her as an authoritarian terror who has this reflex tendency to misunderstand the sensitive issues I am facing as an adolescent. On the contrary, I see her as the 24-hour best friend who I can talk to or fool around with anytime.

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mothering

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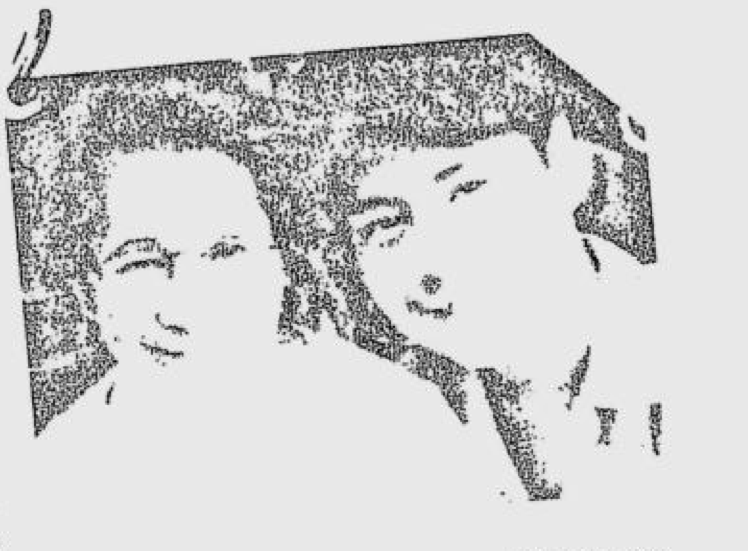

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One cool mom

By Isaya Mari D. Adefuin

FRIENDS often tell me I have the coolest mom. That's Rowena Danta-Adefuin.

Growing up, my siblings and I never had to worry about Mama not allowing us to go on "gimmicks," overnight bonding sessions with friends, out-of-town trips.

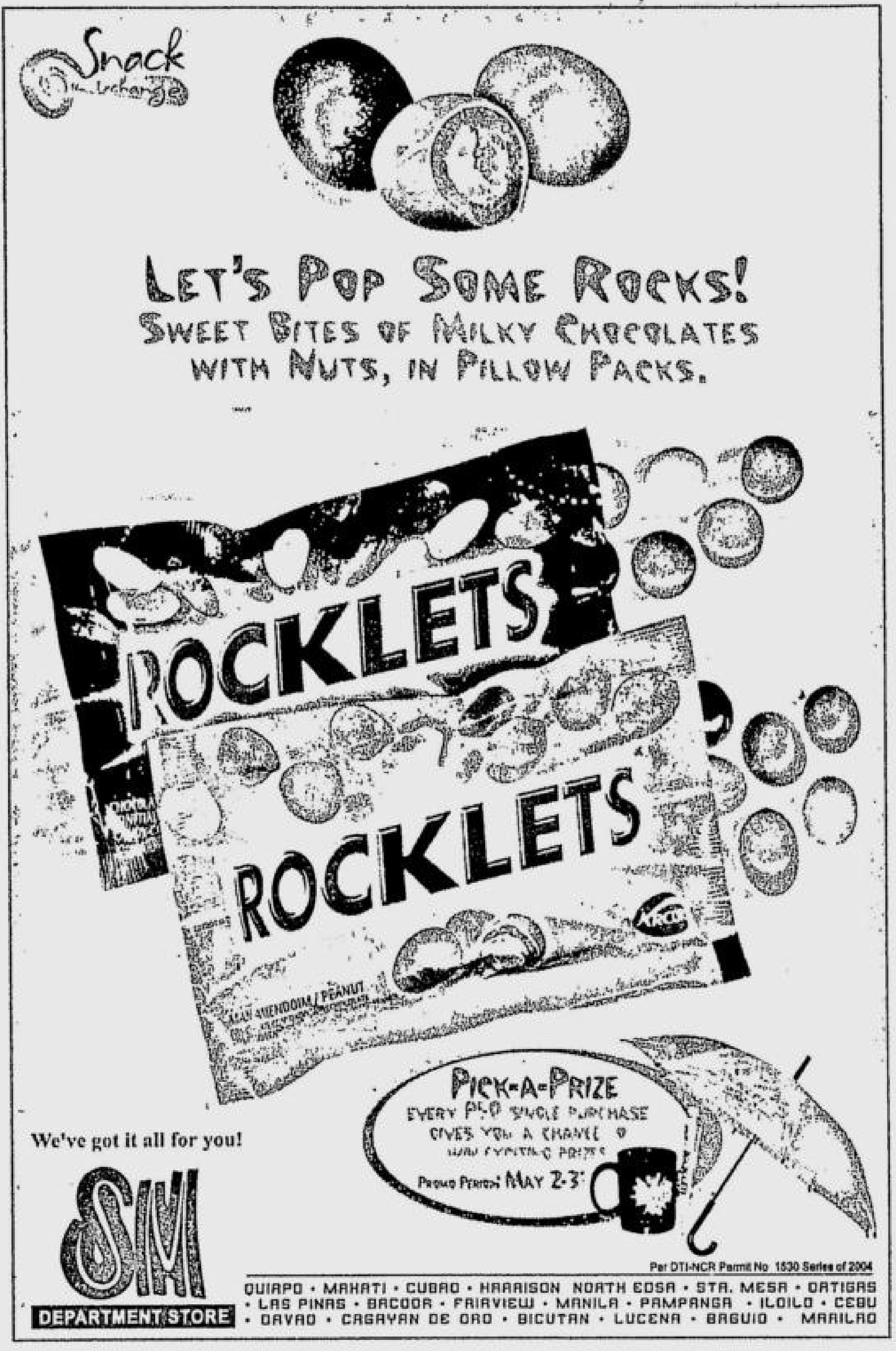
It didn't matter to her if there were boys in the house. The day after our grad ball, she chanced upon me and around 18 of my classmates, girls, boys and in-betweens "sardined" in a single hotel room, sleeping side by side each other. And she thought it was cool.

I was never quite able to relate to my friends' dilemma of having "secret relationships," their fear of getting caught and getting separated from their loves. Mama encouraged my sister and I to have boyfriends, my brother to have a girlfriend. She said it was better that there's someone to love us and take care of us, especially when they're away.

But, and it's a big "but": no sex. She's very clear on that. But if you really can't stop yourself, she said, better know what you're doing and get protected.

We often attribute our liberal upbringing to her spunky and outgoing personality, and her having led a vibrant, colorful life when she was younger. But I guess it's all about Mama teaching us that if you learn to trust somebody, that person will not do anything bad or stupid to break that trust.

Trust is precious, something we would not compromise for momentary pleasure or selfish gains. It's a lifelong lesson only Mama can give.



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The unexpected joy of my life

May 12, 2002
5:30 p.m., Sunday

To my dearest Nehemiah Luke,

This is the first and last thing that I want you to know: I love you very, very much.

I've put off writing this letter to you for so long. Today you are 16 weeks already and the days are coming by so fast that it won't be long before you will be running and playing like other little boys.

You can't imagine the joy that you have brought into my life. *Sabi nga nila, "consuelo ko."* Despite my disobeying God numerous times, He has given me to you, or rather you to me. And you're healthy, strong and good-natured.

Please forgive me if you felt unwanted while you were still in my womb. The circumstances of how you were conceived were not favorable in God's sight. But you have been blessed. So much! So many people were excited to see you, and you've been showered with gifts, prayers and love.

I remember seeing you first on the ultrasound machine. I cried because it confirmed that I was pregnant. I cried because I was so scared. I cried because I was not ready. But most of all, I cried because I didn't know how I could raise you, teach you things, and make decisions for you.

I was still fixing my life, deciding on what to do for the rest of it; and there you were, a totally unexpected presence. How could I take care of you when I couldn't even take care of myself?

I just couldn't get married. I wasn't ready. I wasn't sure I wanted to spend the rest of my life with your father. And I was worried about what my mother would say, and of course, I was worried about what other people would say. I knew a lot was expected of me, and I knew I had failed... big time.

So, *anak*, please forgive me also if I didn't marry your father. I didn't feel it in my heart to wanted to wake up each morning with him beside me and grow old with him. If I had rushed into marriage just because you were coming pretty soon, I knew that all of us would have suffered eventually.

Forgive me also for being hostile to him before. I didn't want to see him, didn't want him to accompany me every time I had to see the doctor. I was mad at him for not being responsible enough not to get me pregnant. It was so annoying, it felt like *"pinagpipilitan niya yung sarili niya sa akin."*

Yet, despite all this, he still loves me. And he loves you very much, too. If you could only see the look on his face every time he went to the nursery after I gave birth. He was so happy to just look at you, so excited to hold you and carry you and take good care of you.

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Next to deciding on having you, marrying your father would be the second most difficult decision I have to make. It will change our lives completely. But even if I still have fears, doubts and bouts of indecision, I am ready to take that step because I know that God is already there. We don't know what tomorrow may bring, but I believe His plans are perfect and He would never harm us.

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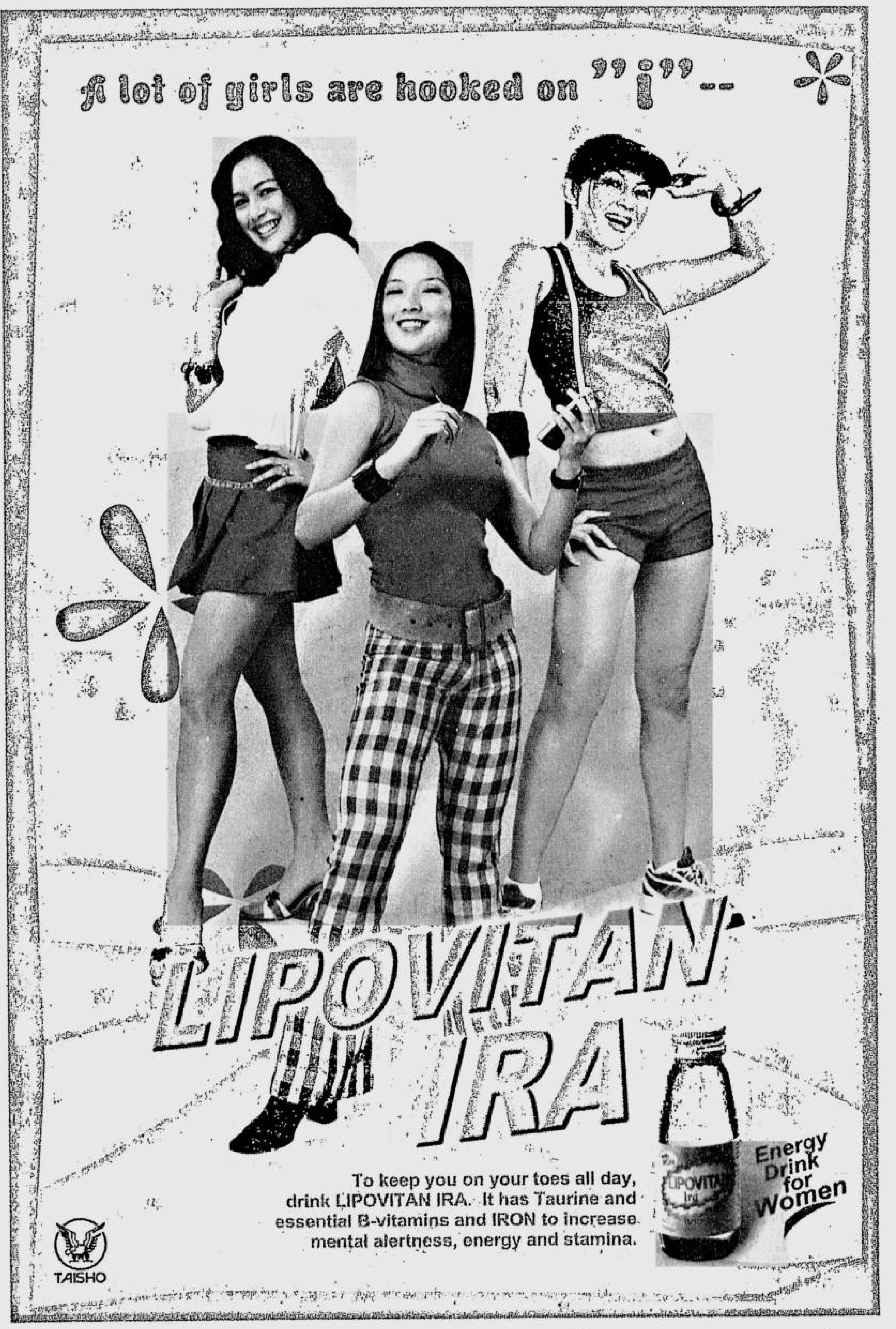

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TAISHO

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One cool mom

By Isaya Mari D. Adefuin

FRIENDS often tell me I have the coolest mom. That's Rowena Danta-Adefuin.

Growing up, my siblings and I never had to worry about Mama not allowing us to go on "gimmicks," overnight bonding sessions with friends, out-of-town trips.

It didn't matter to her if there were boys in the house. The day after our grad ball, she chanced upon me and around 18 of my classmates, girls, boys and in-betweens "sardined" in a single hotel room, sleeping side by side each other. And she thought it was cool.

I was never quite able to relate to my friends' dilemma of having "secret relationships," their fear of getting caught and getting separated from their loves. Mama encouraged my sister and I to have boyfriends, my brother to have a girlfriend. She said it was better that there's someone to love us and take care of us, especially when they're away.

But, and it's a big "but": no sex. She's very clear on that. But if you really can't stop yourself, she said, better know what you're doing and get protected.

We often attribute our liberal upbringing to her spunky and outgoing personality, and her having led a vibrant, colorful life when she was younger. But I guess it's all about Mama teaching us that if you learn to trust somebody, that person will not do anything bad or stupid to break that trust.

Trust is precious, something we would not compromise for momentary pleasure or selfish gains. It's a lifelong lesson only Mama can give.

May 12, 2002
5:30 p.m., Sunday

To my dearest Nehemiah Luke,

This is the first and last thing that I want you to know: I love you very, very much.

I've put off writing this letter to you for so long. Today you are 16 weeks already and the days are coming by so fast that it won't be long before you will be running and playing like other little boys.

You can't imagine the joy that you have brought into my life. *Sabi nga nila, "consuelo ko."* Despite my disobeying God numerous times, He has given me to you, or rather you to me. And you're healthy, strong and good-natured.

Please forgive me if you felt unwanted while you were still in my womb. The circumstances of how you were conceived were not favorable in God's sight. But you have been blessed. So much! So many people were excited to see you, and you've been showered with gifts, prayers and love.

I remember seeing you first on the ultrasound machine. I cried because it confirmed that I was pregnant. I cried because I was so scared. I cried because I was not ready. But most of all, I cried because I didn't know how I could raise you, teach you things, and make decisions for you.

I was still fixing my life, deciding on what to do for the rest of it, and there you were, a totally unexpected presence. How could I take care of you when I couldn't even take care of myself?

I just couldn't get married. I wasn't ready. I wasn't sure I wanted to spend the rest of my life with your father. And I was worried about what my mother would say, and of course, I was worried about what other people would say. I knew a lot was expected of me and I knew I had failed... big time.

So, *anak*, please forgive me also if I didn't marry your father. I didn't feel it in my heart to wanted to wake up each morning with him beside me and grow old with him. If I had rushed into marriage just because you were coming pretty soon, I knew that all of us would have suffered eventually.

Forgive me also for being hostile to him before. I didn't want to see him, didn't want him to accompany me every time I had to see the doctor. I was mad at him for not being responsible enough not to get me pregnant. It was so annoying, it felt like *"pinagpipilitan niya yung sarili niya sa akin."*

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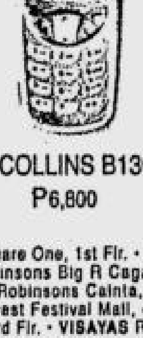
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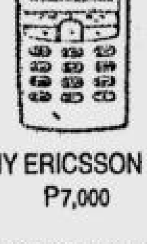
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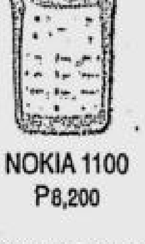
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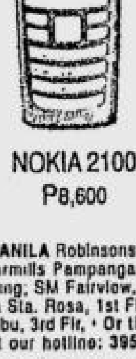
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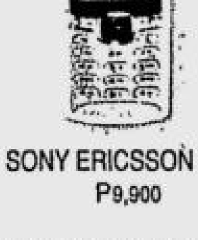
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Half-mommy's girl

She'll always be my mother. And if I've done things that have hurt her, I'm sorry

By Macy Alcaraz

I'VE always labeled myself as a daddy's girl. The first poem of mine that ever got published in a book was about my father.

But I've realized that I write a lot about my father and not enough about my mother. And although my daddy's birthday is a day before mothers' day, let me take this time to shift the limelight to my mother and write about the woman who, for nine long months, carried me inside her.

She's definitely one of my favorite people in the world. Most of the time, anyway. How she manages to keep this household together is still a mystery to me.

She complains about how we don't know the value of money and how we should stop asking her for things. But this is the same woman who takes her family to the mall and makes sure that everyone goes home with something.

This is the same woman who makes sure the pantry is filled with our favorite food. The same woman who used to bring us to National Bookstore after school and let us get as many books as we liked.

All of my brothers and I have our own little stories about our mommy. Our mother scoffs at stage parents, when in fact she's one herself. She's the ever-proud mother, announcing to her friends that his son has won an award, or "my eldest, he's the guitarist of the year, you know."

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Hard to please

She's the hardest to please when it comes to academics. "What, a 2.5? Okay, better luck next time," she told my younger brother who was just a freshman in UP. "Cum laude lang?" she told me when I was about to graduate.

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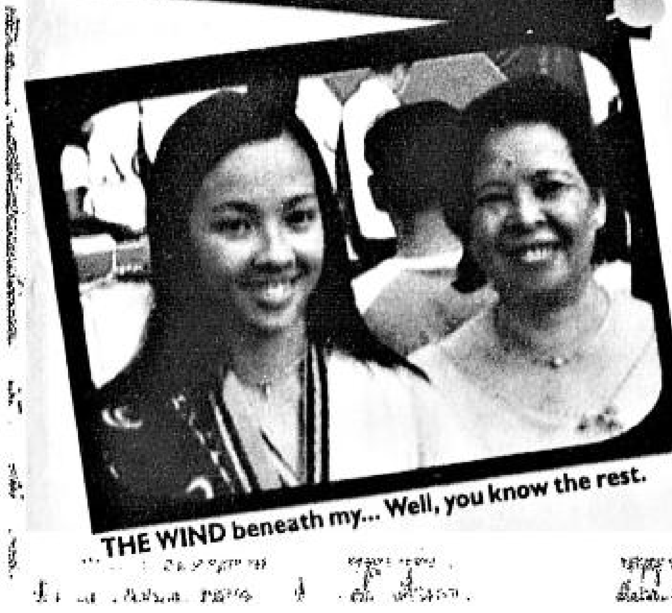

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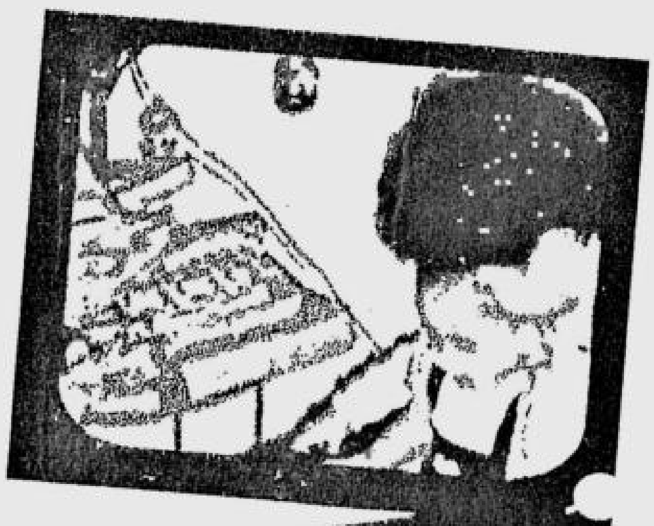

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Preschool teacher, wannabe mother

By Bunny Anne Gapit
2bUI Correspondent

June 03, 2003

I have misgivings about giving birth. I am smaller than most women and I'm afraid I can't "open" that much. I even have breathing problems, for heaven's sake. What if I cut my baby's head on his way out? Or, they come out as Siamese twins? I am not even pregnant and yet I can't stop thinking about chromosomal aberrations! And you know what they say about the power of the mind... Oh no.

July 11, 2003

Who says I need to flash myself without poise and crumple my face to bits in front of the docs and nurses just to have my own bundles of joy? As a preschool teacher, I am already a mother of 20 at age 24.

Aug. 25, 2003

There's this sweet little girl in kinder class named Abby who bursts into endless "I love you's" whenever I pass by. Aww... Just why aren't you in my class?

Sept. 8, 2003

Perfect! We're out on a field trip today and my teacher aide is nowhere in sight. In times like this I have the most jarring job on earth. I am tired going to and from the bathroom. Come on kids, why can't you just piss all at the same time?!

Sept. 29, 2003

My pupil Gel was humming "For the First Time" as he was entering my class. There's something amazing about a 4-year-old singing a "grown-up" song like that. When I cut in, I was all the more amazed when he didn't stop and in fact asked for an encore. We both enjoyed our little duet. So fun!

Oct. 6, 2003

I caught a girl pupil of mine chastising her classmate, "*Ano ba, ang baho ng hininga mo!*" in the rudest tone she could make. Whew.

This is the same girl who ordered her *yaya* to only eat from a plate intended for maids. She's also the same girl who changes nannies every other week.

To Anam Cara and Amit Orb (my children not born yet), I'd pull your tongues long enough to hang you if I ever hear you talk like that. Trust me.

Oct. 27, 2003

Gel's mom dropped by the school and the scenes I saw from the two melted me. So sweet and vocal about their affections. I never had that kind of relationship with my mother. I just wish my love for her is strong enough for me to come to her reservations at all. Is that possible?

Nov. 24, 2003

Monmon threw a tantrum in class today and hurled a chalk at my face. He was as resistant as a mule but I was mad as a cow.

My unusually apathetic treatment drove him to say resentfully, "*Akala ko ba, kahit bad, lab pa rin?*" before sobbing his heart out. He was referring to the moral of the story I just read to them today. It was titled "How do I love thee, let me count the ways."

To Anam Cara and Amit Orb: Please, don't put me to a test like this.

March 14, 2004

To get my class to follow me, I tap their guilt factor. I'd tell them classes will soon be over and we need to create good memories than bad ones in our last days together. I thought the most sentimental responses I got from them were just puzzled looks and moments of silence.

Today though I was surprised to see Gel's eyes swollen from tears. He told me the reason. "*Eh, kasi... Ayoko* three days *na lang tayo*, teacher... *Ayyookooo...*," he whined, tears welling up once more. His guardian and I had a good laugh together.

May 7, 2004

I miss my kids. I never thought I'd miss them this much. The food they let let me taste during breaks, the laughter that filled our classroom everyday, the way they intentionally called me "teachoh" instead of teacher.

Sigh. I know what they subliminally meant by that. They loved me too.

Love's sacrifices

By Arvee S. Salazar

IT was another Friday afternoon. As I got home from school at 7:30 in the evening, my father was already there making dinner. He was bustling in the kitchen, cooking rice and making another delicious meal.

My dad's dishes are always yummy to the taste, but recently I had noticed that he makes Fridays' meals always extra special. The smell of deliciously baked chicken was already filling my senses.

I greeted him and went to my room just to change my clothes and put my bag down. After that, I went out to join my brother in cleaning the house. He was already halfway finished dusting the last room, so I went to get the broom and started sweeping. In the comfortable silence, we finished our chores.

This has been the routine in our house every Friday ever since my mom got promoted and had to work five days a week away from our home. Five years have gone by since that day she told us the news. I was 16 and my brother was 13 when her office promoted her and assigned her to a place outside of our town.

She said we didn't have any choice. We couldn't live on my father's income alone and she values her career too, so we just had to sacrifice. She would leave for work early Monday or late Sunday and would be back home by Friday.

"Don't worry baby," she said. "I'll go home every week. Nothing is gonna change."

But I was worried. What if things did change? What if she forgot about us or what if she had an accident on the road? Oh, why did she have to be so far away? So many questions were racing in my head. I was so confused. I just knew I was going to miss my mother so much. But I also knew that what she said was true. We just had to take it for what it was.

Far but near

As time went by, we began to adjust to our new situation. What mother said was right, things didn't have to change. Sure, she was not there physically all the time, but she was still very much involved in our household.

She would call on the phone always to check on us or to just say "hi" and have a little chat. She was still there for me and my brother when we needed a mother to make our will strong and to inspire us. And our pranks and naughtiness still didn't go unnoticed. We still get scolded for our misdemeanors even if she was hundreds of miles away.

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And I hope you could clarify some sub-branches of our family tree, especially on the father side, if you happen to know about them. Only last year I knew of a sister on *your* side, and that was a relief of some sort. But please, warn me if there's any more secret sibling ready to pop up from somewhere. I might be going out with a brother for all I know!

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Mommy Lianne is our living saint. She never fails to attend mass, visits the Blessed Sacrament and pray the rosary every day. She perennially reminds us—even our household help—to go to confession. We don't know anyone who's more concerned about our—and everyone else's—moral values.

She is selfless. We often play tug-of-war in seeking her attention, and mom never fails to attend to every single one of us.

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Preschool teacher, wannabe mother

By Bunny Anne Gapit
2bU! Correspondent

June 03, 2003

I have misgivings about giving birth. I am smaller than most women and I'm afraid I can't "open" that much. I even have breathing problems, for heaven's sake. What if I cut my baby's head on his way out? Or, they come out as Siamese twins? I am not even pregnant and yet I can't stop thinking about chromosomal aberrations! And you know what they say about the power of the mind... Oh no.

July 11, 2003

Who says I need to flash myself without poise and crumple my face to bits in front of the docs and nurses just to have my own bundles of joy? As a preschool teacher, I am already a mother of 20 at age 24.

Aug. 25, 2003

There's this sweet little girl in kinder class named Abby who bursts into endless "I love you's" whenever I pass by. Aww... Just why aren't you in my class?

Sept. 8, 2003

Perfect! We're out on a field trip today and my teacher aide is nowhere in sight. In times like this I have the most jarring job on earth. I am tired going to and from the bathroom. Come on kids, why can't you just piss all at the same time?!

Sept. 29, 2003

My pupil Gel was humming "For the First Time" as he was entering my class. There's something amazing about a 4-year-old singing a "grown-up" song like that. When I cut in, I was all the more amazed when he didn't stop and in fact asked for an encore. We both enjoyed our little duet. So fun!

Oct. 6, 2003

I caught a girl pupil of mine chastising her classmate, "*Ano ba, ang baho ng hininga mo!*" in the rudest tone she could make. Whew.

This is the same girl who ordered her *yaya* to only eat from a plate intended for maids. She's also the same girl who changes nannies every other week.

To Anam Cara and Amit Orb (my children not born yet), I'd pull your tongues long enough to hang you if I ever hear you talk like that. Trust me.

Oct. 27, 2003

Gel's mom dropped by the school and the scenes I saw from the two melted me. So sweet and vocal about their affections. I never had that kind of relationship with my mother. I just wish my love for her is strong enough for me to come to her reservations at all. Is that possible?

Nov. 24, 2003

Monmon threw a tantrum in class today and hurled a chalk at my face. He was as resistant as a mule but I was mad as a cow.

My unusually apathetic treatment drove him to say resentfully, "*Akala ko ba, kahit bad, lab pa rin?*" before sobbing his heart out. He was referring to the moral of the story I just read to them today. It was titled "How do I love thee, let me count the ways."

To Anam Cara and Amit Orb: Please, don't put me to a test like this.

March 14, 2004

To get my class to follow me, I tap their guilt factor. I'd tell them classes will soon be over and we need to create good memories than bad ones in our last days together. I thought the most sentimental responses I got from them were just puzzled looks and moments of silence.

Today though I was surprised to see Gel's eyes swollen from tears. He told me the reason. "*Eh, kasi... Ayoko* three days *na lang tayo*, teacher... *Ayyookooo...*" he whined, tears welling up once more. His guardian and I had a good laugh together.

May 7, 2004

I miss my kids. I never thought I'd miss them this much. The food they let let me taste during breaks, the laughter that filled our classroom everyday, the way they intentionally called me "teachoh" instead of teacher.

Sigh. I know what they subliminally meant by that. They loved me too.

Love's sacrifices

By Arvee S. Salazar

IT was another Friday afternoon. As I got home from school at 7:30 in the evening, my father was already there making dinner. He was bustling in the kitchen, cooking rice and making another delicious meal.

My dad's dishes are always yummy to the taste, but recently I had noticed that he makes Fridays' meals always extra special. The smell of deliciously baked chicken was already filling my senses.

I greeted him and went to my room just to change my clothes and put my bag down. After that, I went out to join my brother in cleaning the house. He was already halfway finished dusting the last room, so I went to get the broom and started sweeping. In the comfortable silence, we finished our chores.

This has been the routine in our house every Friday ever since my mom got promoted and had to work five days a week away from our home. Five years have gone by since that day she told us the news. I was 16 and my brother was 13 when her office promoted her and assigned her to a place outside of our town.

She said we didn't have any choice. We couldn't live on my father's income alone and she values her career too, so we just had to sacrifice. She would leave for work early Monday or late Sunday and would be back home by Friday.

"Don't worry baby," she said. "I'll go home every week. Nothing is gonna change."

But I was worried. What if things did change? What if she forgot about us or what if she had an accident on the road? Oh, why did she have to be so far away? So many questions were racing in my head. I was so confused. I just knew I was going to miss my mother so much. But I also knew that what she said was true. We just had to take it for what it was.

Far but near

As time went by, we began to adjust to our new situation. What mother said was right, things didn't have to change. Sure, she was not there physically all the time, but she was still very much involved in our household.

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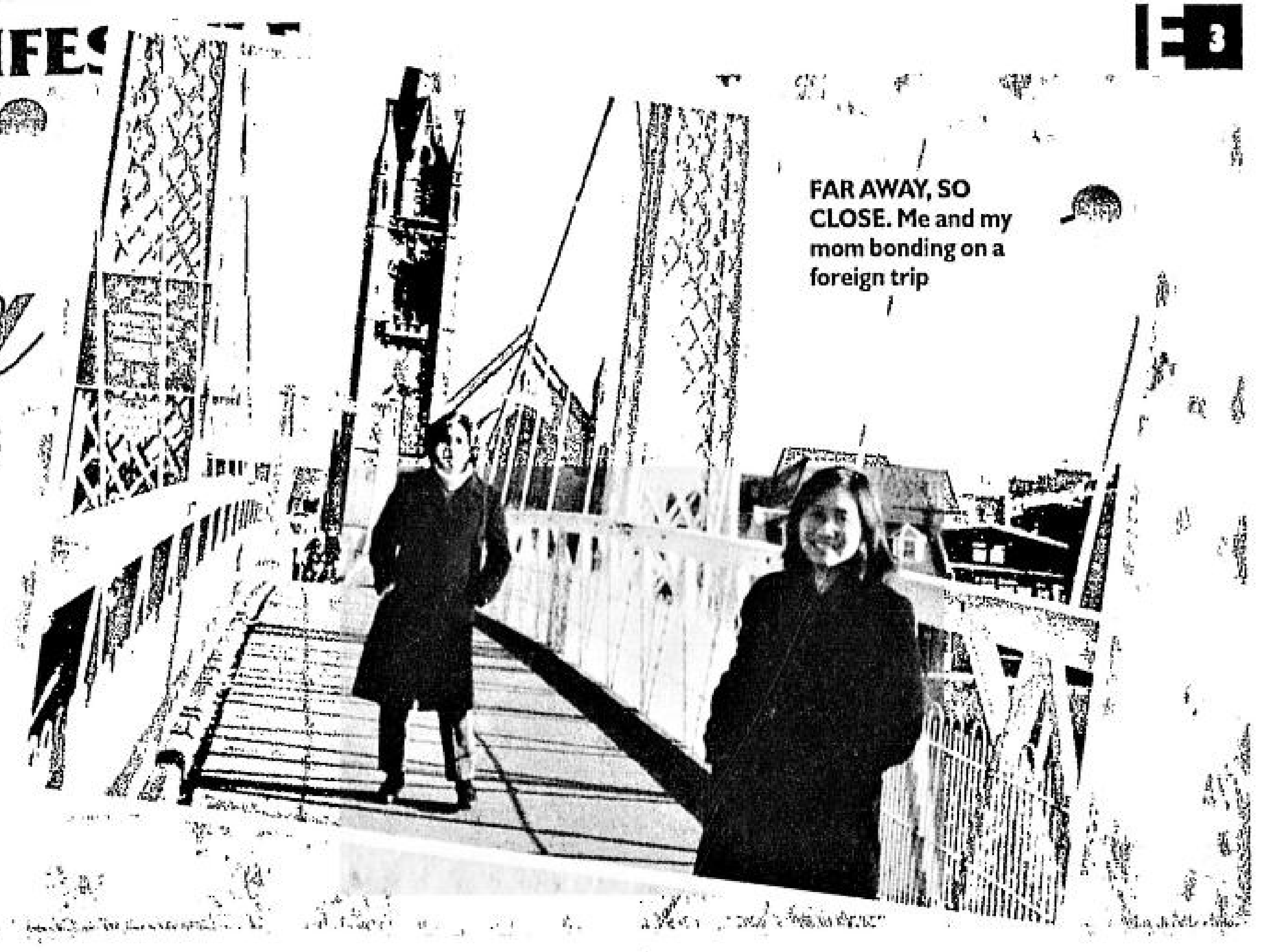
For Mama

By Katrina Natasha Denoga
2bU! Correspondent



FAR AWAY, SO CLOSE. Me and my mom bonding on a foreign trip

> My mother likes to primp. She has used curlers for so long it was a huge shock to learn her hair was naturally straight like mine

LET me tell you a few things about my mother, known to the rest of the world as Ping Denoga. We are not alike. Sometimes I think the only thing I've gotten from her are her allergies.

For starters, she likes the color yellow. Thanks to her, our house is yellow, both inside and out. Some time ago, even our appliances were yellow, but now, she's discovered other colors. Or maybe ovens just don't come in shades of lemon anymore. Me? I like the color purple.

My mother likes flowers. If you look at our curtains and seat covers, you'll find flowers all over them. The same goes for her clothes. Left to herself, Mama will have daisies and sunflowers and roses and gumamelas on her shirts. I, on the other hand, prefer little or no prints at all.

Mama likes to garden. Early in the morning she'll be out tending to her plants. Some time ago, she went out of town for a week and entrusted me with the care of her garden. Of course, I'd seen her plants before, but only when I watered all three thousand of them did I realize she had that many. When my mother called after three days, I told her I'd sold them.

My mother likes to primp. Oh, she's not very vain, but hair and makeup are part of the reason she can't leave the house on time. She has used curlers for so long it was a huge shock to learn her hair was naturally straight like mine. Me? I'm often one of the fastest to get out because all I require is that my clothes be clean.

Mama likes to talk. She can talk to anybody and everybody. It's a gift. But she especially likes to talk to her sisters. When our last phone bill came, she was very surprised to see that she'd called Cagayan, Butuan and Surigao several times on the same day. Then right after putting the bill down, she went and called up her sister in Cagayan. As for me, I can go for the entire day without saying anything to anybody. I find it hard to converse with most people. I'm kind of awkward.

My mother is tough. And she's a realist. Since she had such a hard time growing up, she's become the kind of person who could face anything. On the other hand, I'm a dreamer. Thanks to her, my life has been such that I could afford to be one. She's not sure if this is a good thing.

My mother is a good cook. Good food is something I've taken for granted in our house. It was a surprise to learn that there are mothers out there who don't know how or don't want to. Cooking is something Mama usually likes to do. Until recently she had thought my only culinary skill would be to cook rice on a rice cooker. I'm up to three dishes now.

My mother likes to read. When we were little she'd read to my sister and me even when she was so tired. When we learned to read ourselves, she'd buy us books even though there was no special occasion. Her salary wasn't big, but it was no sacrifice for her. Now she likes to ask me if I have any books she can read.

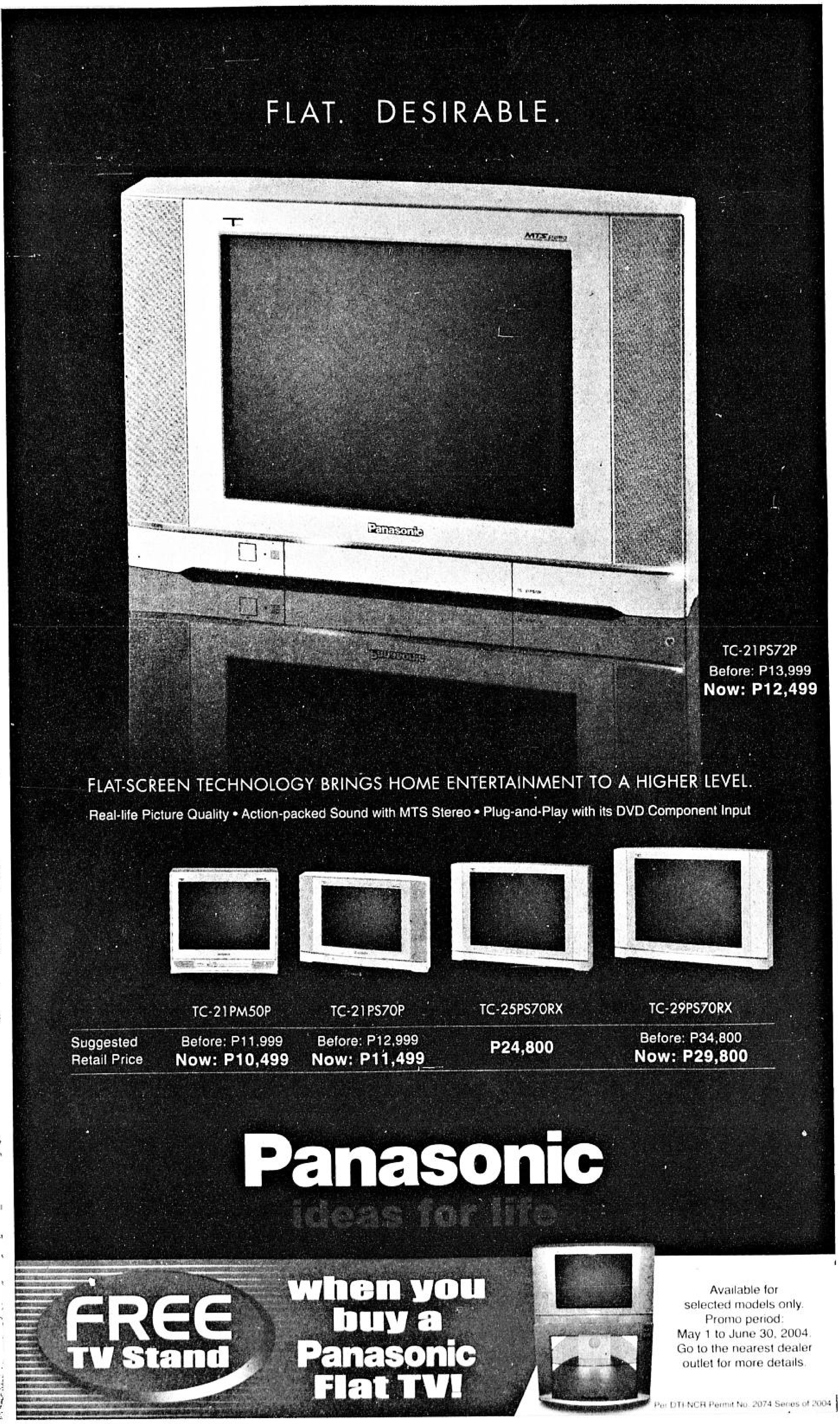
But despite my being different from her, she knows me so well that she can tell if something is wrong with me, even without my having to tell her. One time last year I was seething in silence next to her (I was mad at someone else) when she told me to relax, to let it go. I asked her how she knew I was angry when I hadn't said a word. She said, "You're my daughter." That pretty much covered it.

And even when she doesn't understand or approve of what I'm doing, she hasn't given up on me. Right now I am standing between my mother and (almost) complete happiness. We both know this, by the way. She goes to church every day now. Guess who she's praying for. A few days ago, while skating over the topic of her disappointment, a.k.a. me, she told me with a very audible sigh of resignation that since she can't seem to do anything about it, she has just decided to love me. Other than my father, I don't know who else can do that.

My mother turned 50-something on May 7, just a few days before Mother's Day. This tribute is my birthday and Mother's Day gift all rolled into one. For this tribute, I had asked her to pick a picture of herself that she liked, because I knew that if I ever went behind her back and submitted a picture of her that she didn't like—to a national newspaper!—she'd kill me. I told her that my sister and I were having it blown up and framed.

I lied.

Happy birthday, Mama, and Happy Mother's Day, too.



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By Katrina Natasha Denoga
2bU! Correspondent

LET me tell you a few things about my mother, known to the rest of the world as Ping Denoga. We are not alike. Sometimes I think the only thing I've gotten from her are her allergies.

For starters, she likes the color yellow. Thanks to her, our house is yellow, both inside and out. Some time ago, even our appliances were yellow, but now, she's discovered other colors. Or maybe ovens just don't come in shades of lemon anymore. Me? I like the color purple.

My mother likes flowers. If you look at our curtains and seat covers, you'll find flowers all over them. The same goes for her clothes. Left to herself, Mama will have daisies and sunflowers and roses and gumamelas on her shirts. I, on the other hand, prefer little or no prints at all.

Mama likes to garden. Early in the morning she'll be out tending to her plants. Some time ago, she went out of town for a week ahd entrusted me with the care of her garden. Of course, I'd seen her plants before, but only when I watered all three thousand of them did I realize she had that many. When my mother called after three days, I told her I'd sold them.

My mother likes to primp. Oh, she's not very vain, but hair and makeup are part of the reason she can't leave the house on time. She has used curlers for so long it was a huge shock to learn her hair was naturally straight like mine. Me? I'm often one of the fastest to get out because all I require is that my clothes be clean.

Mama likes to talk. She can talk to anybody and everybody. It's a gift. But she especially likes to talk to her sisters. When our last phone bill came, she was very surprised to see that she'd called Cagayan, Butuan and Surigao several times on the same day. Then right after putting the bill down, she went and called up her sister in Cagayan. As for me, I can go for the entire day without saying anything to anybody. I find it hard to converse with most people. I'm kind of awkward.

My mother is tough. And she's a realist. Since she had such a hard time growing up, she's become the kind of person who could face anything. On the other hand, I'm a dreamer. Thanks to her, my life has been such that I could afford to be one. She's not sure if this is a good thing.

My mother is a good cook. Good food is something I've taken for granted in our house. It was a surprise to learn that there are mothers out there who don't know how or don't want to. Cooking is something Mama usually likes to do. Until recently she had thought my only culinary skill would be to cook rice on a rice cooker. I'm up to three dishes now.

My mother likes to read. When we were little she'd read to my sister and me even when she was so tired. When we learned to read ourselves, she'd buy us books even though there was no special occasion. Her salary wasn't big, but it was no sacrifice for her. Now she likes to ask me if I have any books she can read.

But despite my being different from her, she knows me so well that she can tell if something is wrong with me, even without my having to tell her. One time last year I was seething in silence next to her (I was mad at someone else) when she told me to relax, to let it go. I asked her how she knew I was angry when I hadn't said a word. She said, "You're my daughter." That pretty much covered it.

And even when she doesn't understand or approve of what I'm doing, she hasn't given up on me. Right now I am standing between my mother and (almost) complete happiness. We both know this, by the way. She goes to church every day now. Guess who she's praying for. A few days ago, while skating over the topic of her disappointment, a.k.a. me, she told me with a very audible sigh of resignation that since she can't seem to do anything about it, she has just decided to love me. Other than my father, I don't know who else can do that.

My mother turned 50-something on May 7, just a few days before Mother's Day. This tribute is my birthday and Mother's Day gift all rolled into one. For this tribute, I had asked her to pick a picture of herself that she liked, because I knew that if I ever went behind her back and submitted a picture of her that she didn't like—to a national newspaper!—she'd kill me. I told her that my sister and I were having it blown up and framed.

I lied.

Happy birthday, Mama, and Happy Mother's Day, too.

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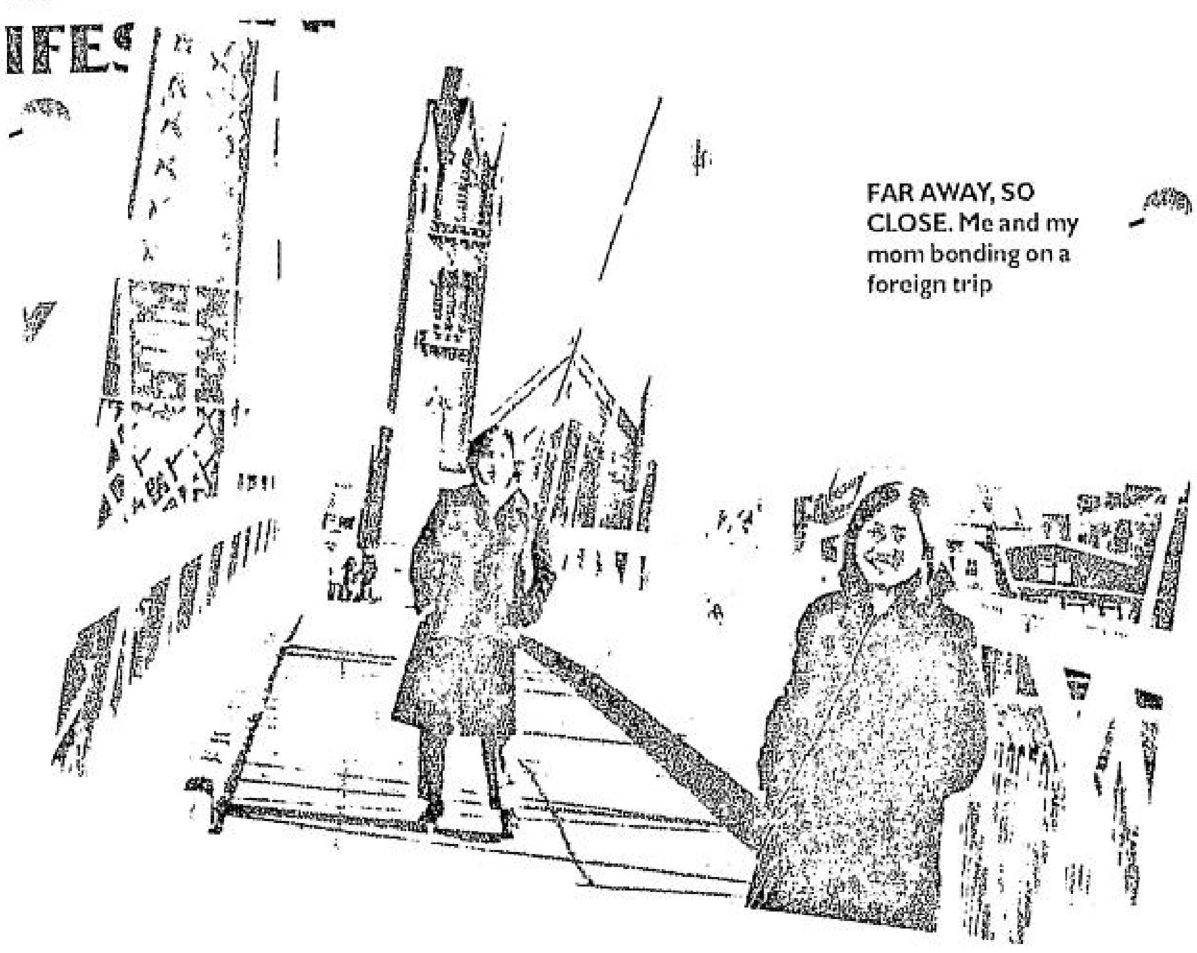
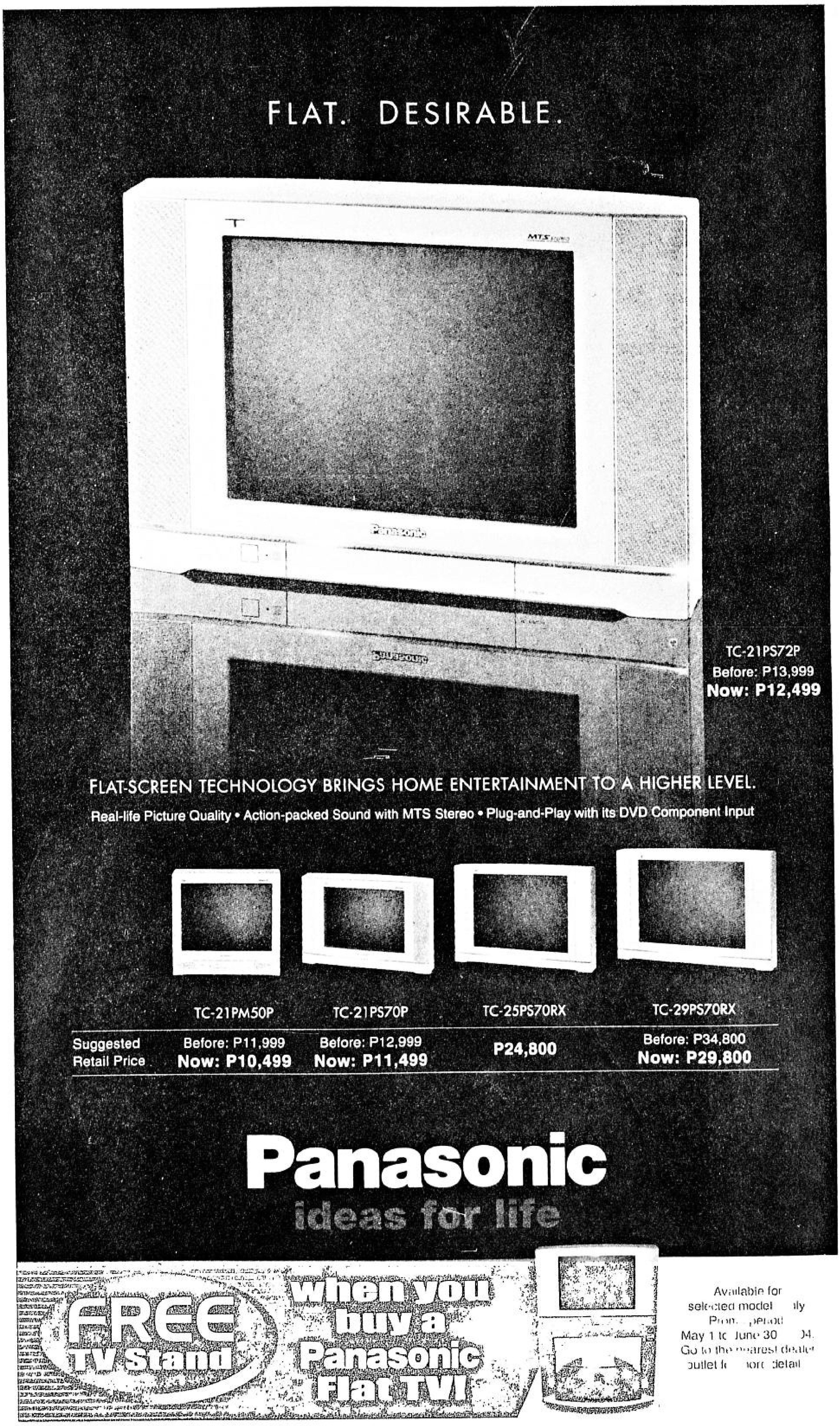


FAR AWAY, SO CLOSE. Me and my mom bonding on a foreign trip



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ROSARIO DELA ROSA PASTOR still rides her exercise bike and dances to Jane Fonda every morning. She is coolness personified. More than a biological mom to five children and a grandma to four crazy kids, she has become a surrogate mom to countless blessed individuals.

Promise, I'll clean my closet

By Diviña S. Tutaan

WHEN I'm usually asked by my friends about my mother, I put down whatever it is I'm holding, smooth my hair, smile and say, "Well, my mom's the best mom in the world. She's always there for us, helping us in our homework, cooking for us and guiding me when I have problems..."

Then, just when I'm about to add more information about how wonderful my mom is, Krizz will change the topic and talk about her problem with her boyfriend, then Tansio will perform goofy acrobatics with his arms.

So stories about my mom will get shoved aside, and we would all have to listen about Krizz's love life.

It's so sad to realize that in usual conversations in schools, serious topics about family dynamics, particularly mother-daughter relationships, are being sidelined by topics like who got the first pick in the basketball draft, who's courting who, the deadline for the thesis outline and other stuff that we think are more important.

THERE'S the reason I'm willing to cry and admit to the world that I can be mushy for a change.

Maybe it's because of our modern-day thinking and liberal lifestyles, but we seem to be fearful of talking about more emotional things regarding our families. I myself wouldn't want my friends to see me shedding tears of joy when talking about how good my mom is and how much I love her. But that's because I have a certain reputation of being goofy and controlled, and being emotional is the last thing I want to be.

But today, since it's mom's day, I don't mind telling everyone that while writing these lines, I'm crying (with matching tissue paper and water), and feeling so touched while remembering all the things she has done for me, my dad, my sister Bern and my younger brother, L.A.

I remember when I was three years old, after I had an accident and got my right leg in a cast, my mom kept reminding my *"yaya"* to look after me and not let me reach out for heavy stuff that would hurt me.

My mom wouldn't even let me play outside our house because I'd get bitten by mosquitoes and other insects.

In 1989, after a strong earthquake, I arrived from St. Paul College of Pasig, my school for 14 years, to tight hugs from my mom, who asked me if I was ok and even checked to see if we had injuries.

When I was in my second year high school, I sprained my ankle playing *"luksong baka"* with my classmates. My mom and dad rushed to the school clinic to pick me up. You could just imagine how ashamed I was to tell them that I got sprained because I was playing in the corridor. My dad got a little furious, but my mom just smiled and told me, "When I was your age, I fell from a tree because I was getting *"bayabas"* from my neighbor's fence." Cool mom!

Many things in common

My mom and I have a lot of things in common. We're both playful, even up to now. There are instances when we would both laugh just from watching my brother eat (he eats a lot), or at anyone who passes by and catches our attention while we're drinking coffee at Eastwood. And we've practiced dancing "Otso-otso" while she was cooking!

Most of the time, we share the same opinions about certain topics and issues. I think that's why our humor shares the same frequency. I also got my love for reading and writing from her.

During her free time, my mom would just read and take down notes on points she finds helpful for her and our family in the book she is reading. Usually, when I'm about to submit an article for Seventeen magazine, she's the one who proofreads my work.

But of course, this article was not proofread by her because this is meant as a surprise.

I'm a person who likes seeing the people around me happy and proud of me, especially my family. Whenever I do something good, I can see in the eyes of my parents how proud they are of me. My mom's a housewife, but she has an AB degree. So I perfectly understand when she tells people "how good Dindin is because she's my daughter."

Today, since it is Zenaida S. Tutaan's Day, I just would like to tell her how much I thank God that she's my mother and how much I love her. I wouldn't choose any other mom in the whole wide world!

Even if we fight because I forgot to turn off the lights in my room or I didn't clean my closet, I wouldn't stop making her proud of me.

She's the reason I'm willing to cry and admit to the world that I can be mushy for a change. Happy Mother's Day, Mom! And I promise to clean my closet.

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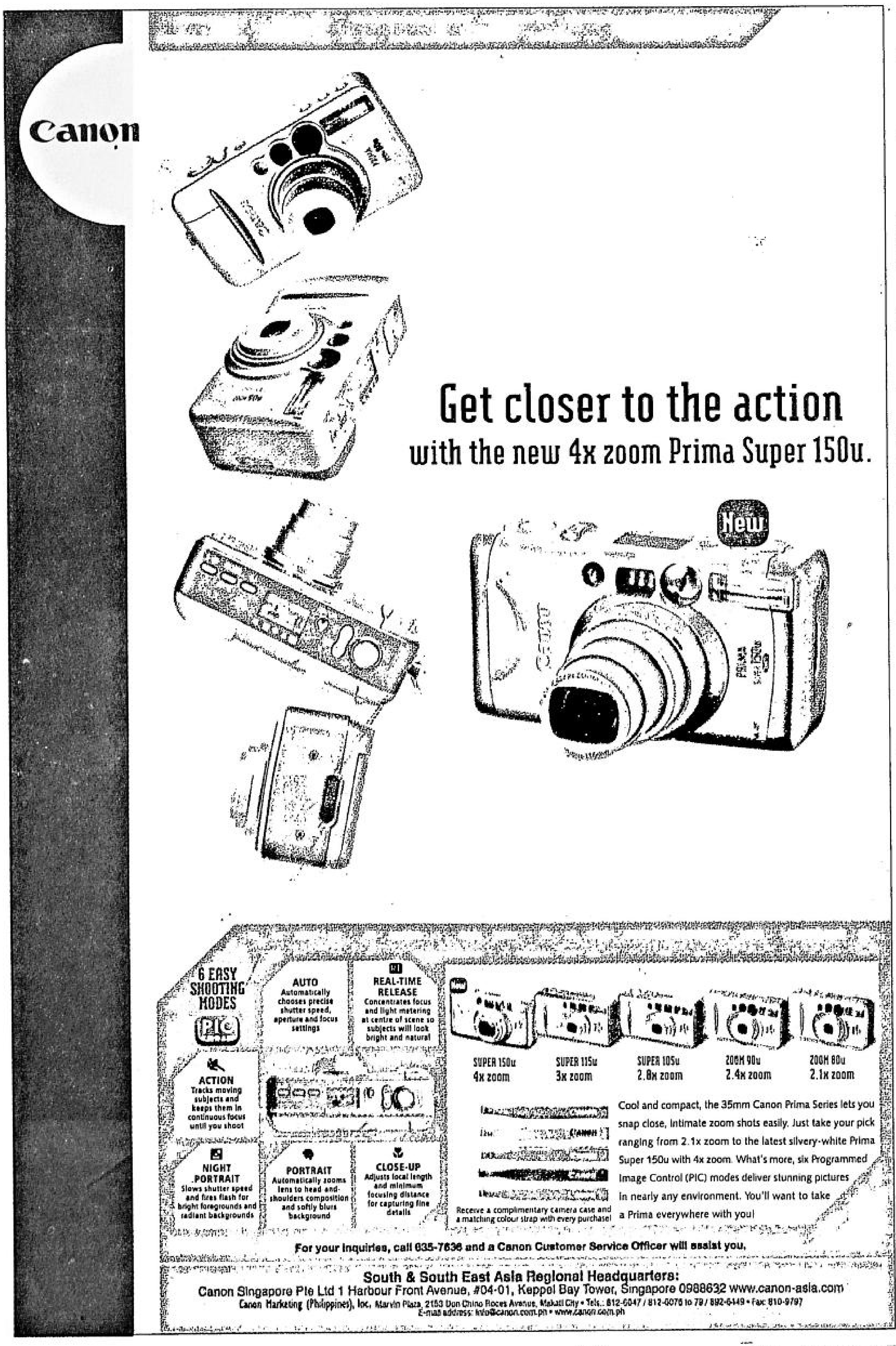

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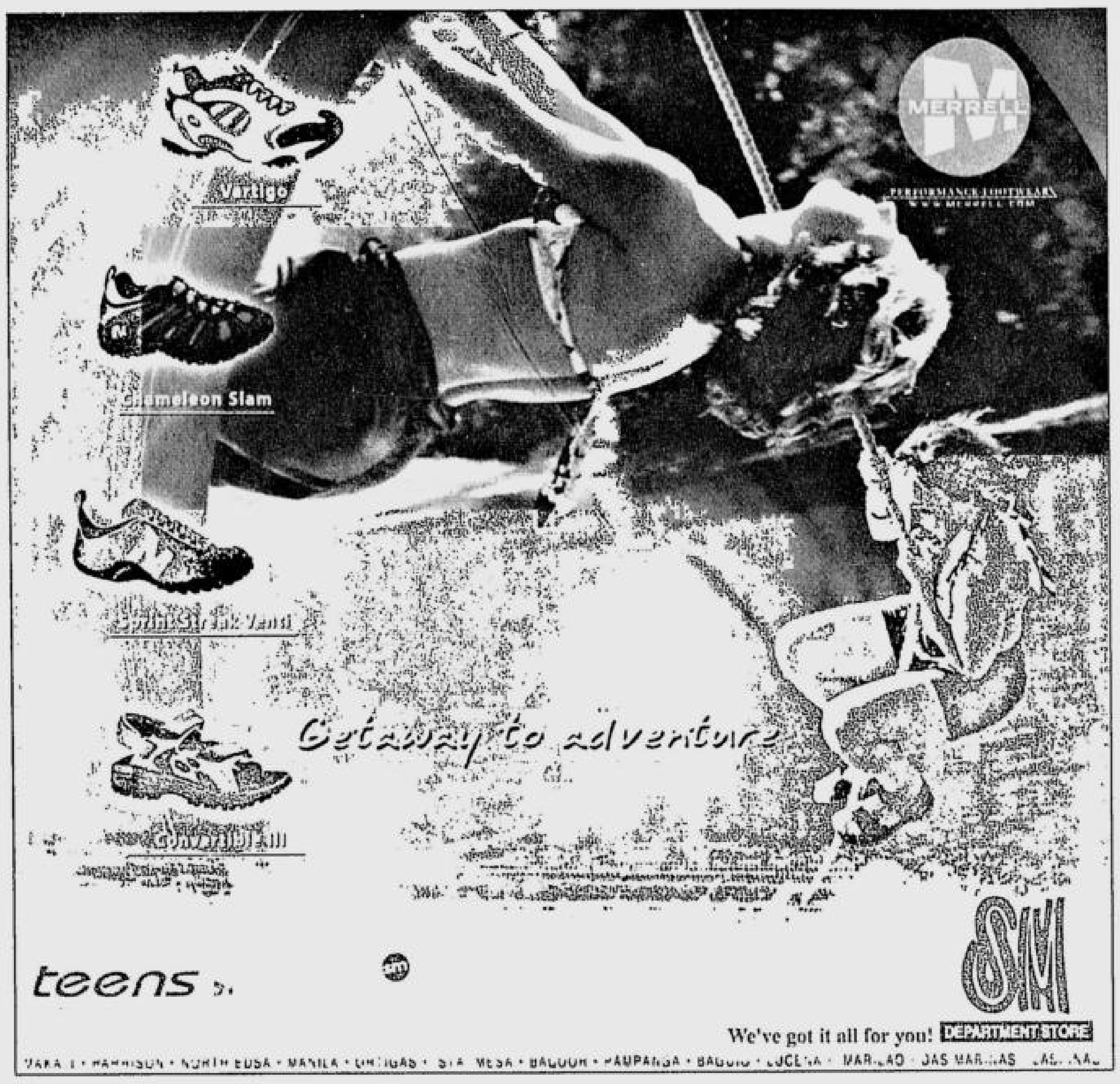

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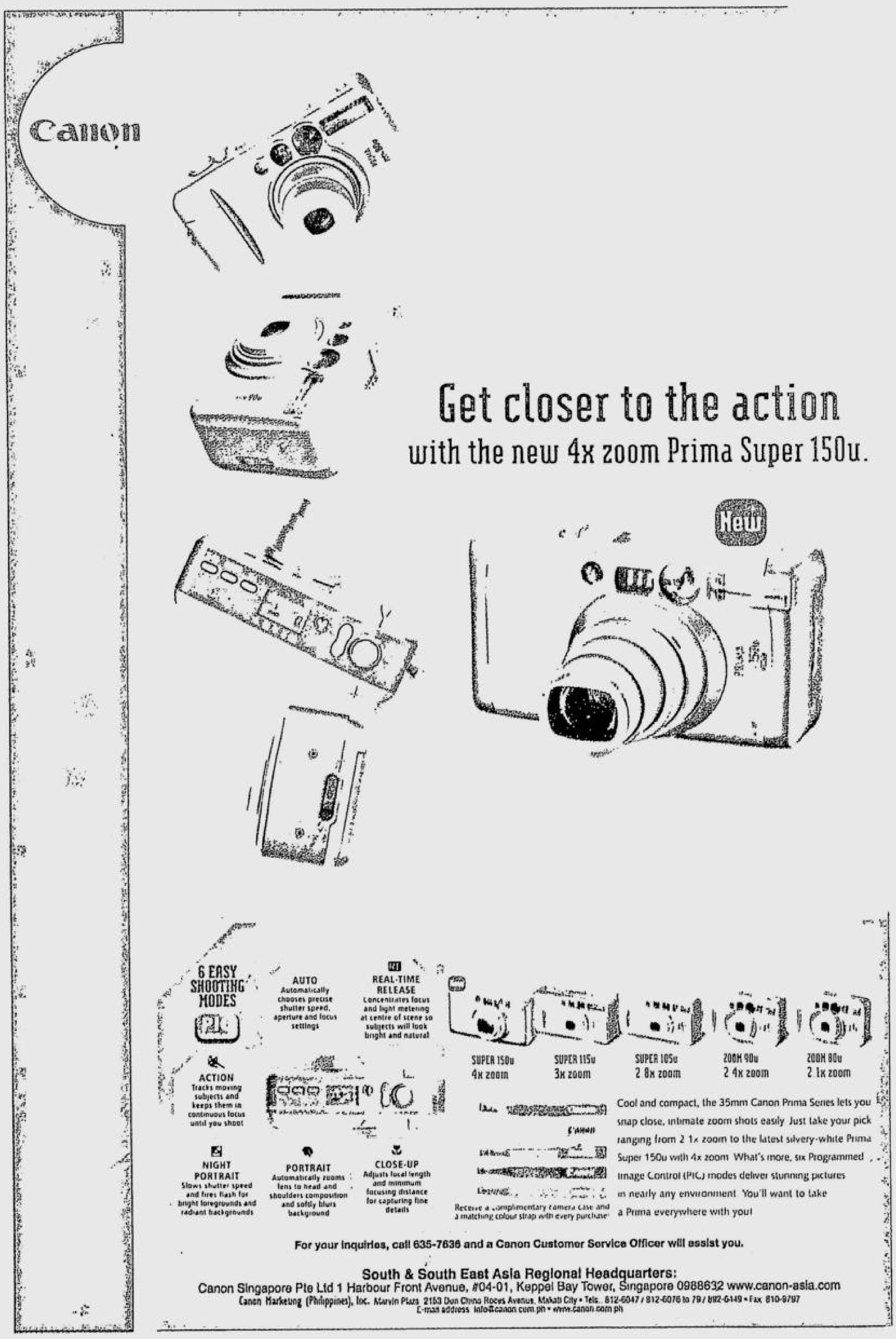

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